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POLITICS AND EDUCATION

BY

LEONARD NELSON

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of Göttingen*

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WITH A FOREWORD BY

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FOREWORD

THIS volume is being issued in the hope that readers of the addresses and lectures included in it may be induced to make further acquaintance with the works and thoughts of Leonard Nelson, and to exert themselves actively, in so far as they are persuaded of their validity, in bringing them to bear on the practice of social life. Interests which usually present themselves as detached from one another—philosophical, educational, ethical, political interests, for example—may be expected to be attracted to various parts of the volume and to derive furtherance and enlightenment from it; and to readers who are apt to be absorbed in abstract and austere philosophic argument the fifth section, “The Moral and the Religious View of the World,” may be especially commended as suitable to be read first. But the satisfaction of isolated interests is not the aim of the author or of his friends; it is obvious from Nelson’s example and from the whole tendency of the volume that he aims at a philosophic system

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which shall embrace and penetrate all our thought and action.

Nelson makes it, I think, sufficiently clear that the educational problem with which he is here more particularly concerned is a limited one, namely, of training the intellect and will of selected persons for the task of political leadership. His more learned readers will be reminded of Plato's Republic, and Nelson himself finds the resemblance between Plato's design and his own worth mentioning. This emphasis on "leadership" as against democracy may indeed be said to be the main theme of the present collection of addresses, as of Nelson's recent work generally. As readers will see, however, the lectures embody much profound experience and reflection of a more general kind, apt to instruct those who may not yet be persuaded of the claims of the author's main project.

The attack upon democracy, into which Nelson has entered with such vehemence, will probably excite, at the outset at least, much sincere doubt and dissent even among persons disposed to sympathize strongly with Nelson's ideals. It may be hoped that they will recognize the gravity of the causes which have led the author to his con-

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clusions and that they will not prematurely abandon the problem of reconciling authority with liberty to mere aspiration or to fate. One may fairly ascribe much of our devotion to our democratic parties and institutions to our inertia, to our sense of our own actual or potential importance in them or under them, or to our habit of shrinking from personal responsibility ; but there are also genuine convictions of the dangers of tyranny and privilege, and of the rightness in themselves of democratic arrangements as recognizing human equality and as conferring full membership in a society. Submission to leadership, even leadership of the self-assertive kind, is a strongly marked feature of contemporary public life ; but from this Nelson, as well as his adversaries, could derive much support for his contentions.

British readers will probably be inclined to wish that these ideas had been presented to the public of this country in closer connection with events and situations familiar to us, which Nelson, with all his diligence and earnestness, could only apprehend rather remotely. But such tasks must be reserved, I suppose, for British minds and pens.

W. J. ROBERTS.

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INTRODUCTION

PROFESSOR LEONARD NELSON was born in Berlin in 1882. On his mother's side he is descended from the family of Dirichlet the mathematician, and from that of the famous musician Mendelssohn-Bartholdy. His own studies have been directed to mathematics and astronomy, and in more recent years to philosophy, ethics and politics.

In the year 1909 he began his work as Privat-docent at Göttingen, and in 1919 became Professor at the University, where the mathematical tradition enabled him to restore the strict methods of scientific investigation in the study of philosophy. He made the critical work of Kant the foundation of his own, and under the inspiration of Fries, one of Kant's successors, he was able, in his book *The Critique of Practical Reason* (Kritik der praktischen Vernunft), to establish the scientific basis of Ethics. This work prepared the way for the building up of a system of moral philosophy and of pedagogics and for giving a scientific foundation for politics.

International interest in the work of Professor Nelson was shown by the fact that, in 1911, he was invited to the International Philosophical

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Congress at Bologna, where he delivered his famous lecture on "The So-called Problem of Knowledge" ("Ueber das sogenannte Erkenntnisproblem"). At Easter 1914 he was invited by his French colleagues to lecture in Paris on "The Foundations of Geometry" ("Des fondements de la Géométrie").

In that year he was lecturing at Göttingen on the subject of Political Philosophy, and on July 31, 1914, the very day before the declaration of war, he outlined the plan of a League of Nations which was almost a forecast of that afterwards proposed by President Wilson. The publication of this lecture was prohibited by the military censor, and it was only permitted after the revolution of 1918. It was then issued in the series of works called *Public Life* (Oeffentliches Leben); and Professor Nelson has ever shown himself a true friend of the principles of the League.

In recent years Professor Nelson's work has been along the lines of the practical application of ethical principles, especially within the sphere of politics. Here the following works are important: *The Reform of Mental Outlook through Education in Self-Confidence* (Die Reformation der Gesinnung durch Erziehung zum Selbstvertrauen), *The Reformation of Philosophy through the Critique of Reason* (Die Reformation der Philosophie durch

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die Kritik der Vernunft), and *The Reformation of Public Life by the Party of Reason* (Die Reformation des öffentlichen Lebens durch die Partei der Vernunft), which is still in course of preparation.

As will be seen from the last of the papers here translated, Professor Nelson is seeking to put his philosophical theories into practical effect. In his school at Walkemühle he is training young workers for leadership in political life along the lines laid down in the lecture on "Education for Leadership."

Reference has already been made to the connection of Professor Nelson's work with that of Fries, and to readers who are interested in religion or philosophy it may be of interest to note this connection more closely.

Jacob Friedrich Fries (1773-1843) made the work of Kant the foundation of his philosophical teaching, but was able to advance a significant step further in his discussion of the nature and range of our knowledge. Kant had shown that our knowledge of the world about us was conditioned by the forms of space and time. We could not know things as they were-in-themselves, but only as phenomena which presented themselves to us in space and time. When he came to the world of Ideas—of freedom, duty, justice, immortality, God, and the like—he could only regard them as

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demands of the Practical Reason, and could give them no real validity within the realm of the speculative reason.

Fries faced this question by making a fresh examination of the problem of knowledge. He agreed with Kant as to the nature and conditions of our knowledge of the world of Nature. This kind of knowledge, which comes to us through intuition and understanding (Verstand), he called *Wissen* (knowledge): within its range we have intellectual certitude. Our knowledge of the world of Ideas differs from this, not in the degree of its certitude, but in the way in which it comes to us, namely, through reason (Vernunft). This certitude is the certitude of *Glaube* (faith, conviction). It is certainty of things-in-themselves, of ultimate reality. And since these two kinds of certitude are within our own experience, we realise that there are two worlds, that there is a realm of reality beyond the world of Nature and its phenomena. As we enter into the realisation of this world of Ideas, there comes to us a yet further certitude, by the way of feeling (Gefühl), to which Fries gives the name *Ahndung* (literally, presentiment, divination). It is the certitude of the Divine or Numinous.

The teaching of Fries had little influence for about a century, but a Neo-Friesian School has

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now arisen, and is working out the Friesian philosophy, especially in relation to problems of ethical and religious life. Dr. Rudolf Otto, whose work *Das Heilige* (The Idea of the Holy) is now so well known to English readers; and Dr. Wilhelm Bousset (*Das Wesen der Religion*), represent the side of religious development; whilst Professor Nelson, who in 1905 brought out a centenary edition of Fries' book, *Wissen, Glaube und Abwendung*, has confined his work almost entirely to the ethical teaching, and especially to its bearing upon social and political life.

The ultimate principle of Ethics is that of the infinite worth of each individual life; and the realisation of this worth of the individual life in human society is only possible through Justice, the nature of which is made certain for us through philosophy. To that realisation all the work of Professor Nelson is devoted. (

It is here that the practical politician and the social reformer will find deepest interest in the work of Nelson. No one who is moved by other than selfish interest can be satisfied with the outlook upon human society to-day. Democracy, regarded simply as government by the will of the majority, has manifestly failed to meet the needs or to realise the ideals of human life. Nelson devotes a large portion of his work to showing

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that Democracy as such is no rational principle upon which social well-being can be based and built up.

The lecture on "Democracy and Leadership" has called forth much discussion and criticism in Germany, and to a new edition of this lecture, just issued, Professor Nelson has added a lengthy appendix, in which he reviews the discussion, and finds that the only remedy suggested by the advocates of democracy is "more democracy." For Nelson the only hope is in getting back to an ultimate rational principle, the principle of right, and in political philosophy working out its application in the wide range of social needs and interests.

Some readers may find it difficult to understand Professor Nelson's attitude to religion, and especially to the Churches. It has already been said that his personal interest lies in philosophical ethics, but the fact that he finds the basis of his teaching in the Friesian philosophy is sufficient to indicate that he is not anti-religious. His attitude to the Churches may be understood when we remember that, on the Continent, the organised Churches are marked by a narrow nationalism and by opposition to the forces of progress and human uplifting. Happily this is not the case in England. We rejoice in the fact that movements

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for social betterment find their strongest support and inspiration within the Church, as in the case of C.O.P.E.C. and the Industrial Christian Fellowship. At the same time we feel that these progressive movements, which call forth so much self-sacrificing devotion, have hardly yet realised the philosophic truth of the right which alone can give force and definiteness to their social and political activity.

We may quote here the closing words of Principal A. E. Garvie's review of Professor Nelson's work, *Rechtslehre und Politik*, in the *Sociological Review* for April 1926: "I have done scant justice in this brief outline to the wealth of the contents of this interesting and important volume. The occasional quotations are but a scanty indication of the knowledge and wisdom displayed by the author. . . . It is a pleasant duty to call the attention of English readers to a treatment of the subject which bases politics on ethics and the State on conscience."

To that larger work the present translations may perhaps form an introduction.

W. LANSDELL.

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DEMOCRACY AND LEADERSHIP

A Lecture delivered at the Swiss Holiday
School of the International League of
Youth, at Fextal, July 27, 1919

I

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I ASSUME that no one of us any longer supposes that, for a true reformation of society, we need to wait until everyone is inspired by goodwill, which of itself will bring it about. On the contrary, we are agreed that that end is only to be reached by means of the gradual acquisition of power—the power which is necessary in order to ensure, by means of external organisations, a state of justice in society.

Now before entering upon the question which is of greatest interest for us to-day—the question how this is to be done—we will look more closely at the aim itself; especially to discover how those organisations for securing justice must be constituted, and how they are to differ from those of the State as it exists to-day. In a word, we ask what shall be the *organised form* of society at which we aim? Organisation indeed is nothing else than the aggregate of external arrangements which ensure that a definite result shall not be left to chance.

First of all, it is necessary for the required

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organisation that the intended result is clearly seen and recognised as such ; and secondly, that this is done by a will which has the power necessary for giving itself effect in the society. We call this will the *government*. Through it, and through it alone, does a community come to be a *State*.

Then the question arises : How, out of the scattered and indeed conflicting wills of all the individuals, is this governing will to emerge ? This question is decided by what we call the *constitution* of the State. We must therefore ask, What constitution of the State are we to try to obtain ?

To men of the present day this question will seem almost superfluous, for it appears to have been solved long ago. It is accepted to-day as an axiom that a State is only rightly framed when it has a *democratic* constitution—a constitution, that is to say, which gives to each individual in the community an equal share in the shaping of the governing will. If we ask men upon what they base their conviction that this form of constitution deserves preference, then—if they do not altogether refuse to seek for reasons for what to them is so self-evident, if they take the trouble to reflect at all upon the question—they will perhaps answer, that any other constitution, whatever may be its nature in other respects, subjects, in a

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despotic fashion, the will of at least a part of the members of the community to an alien will, and is therefore unjust. Freedom, which must form the aim of a just constitution, is only assured by the fact that each individual has equally a share in the shaping of the governing will, for this is the only safeguard against his being oppressed by it.

We will consider what weight there is in this argument.

First of all, it is clear that in forming a government by the equal co-operation of every individual in the State—at least, if we do not start from the fiction of a complete agreement in the opinions and wishes of them all—still only a *majority* will carry out its will. The minority has to give way. And the question arises, What advantage is there in being oppressed by a majority as compared with oppression by an individual?

Perhaps it may be said in reply, that at any rate it is better for a minority to be oppressed than a majority. And at first that seems very obvious.

If, however, we do not allow ourselves to be imposed upon by this argument, but rather inquire more closely as to its foundation, we find the supporter of democracy soon compelled to bring in some reservations. If we ask him whether he would be enthusiastic for the democratic form of

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the State, even if we presuppose a people amongst whom the majority consisted of weak-minded folk or of criminals or even of both, he will hesitate. He will say that naturally he had not thought of so extreme a case. He will then fall back upon the position that democracy is good for a people the majority of whom are sufficiently educated for it—sufficiently, that is, to exclude such an abuse as would arise from the presupposition just made.

Let us, to begin with, note this result. In it we have the admission that there is no universally valid principle according to which only a democratic form of State could be just. A limitation of the principle is introduced which entirely destroys its fundamental character. To demand that the majority ought to determine what is done in the State, *if it wills the right*, is no applicable principle of justice at all. For there is no principle which can determine *that* the decision of the majority shall be just. This demand, that, *on the one hand*, the majority is to decide what is to be done in the State, and that, *on the other hand*, this decision is to satisfy a condition already determined elsewhere—the condition, that is, of justice—this demand asks for too much; it demands what is inconsistent. It is as though we were set the problem of determining *one* unknown quantity

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from *two* independent equations, where, at the most, only by a rare chance can a solution exist.

In order to see this more clearly, let me take an illustration. The place of an excursion for our society has to be decided. Now it is right to propose that we decide by vote to what place we will go. It is also right to say that we will visit the most beautiful place in the district. But it would be foolish to say—the majority is to decide to what place we shall go, but it must, in so doing, choose the most beautiful place. This demand asks too much. If we are going to decide that the most beautiful place is to be our destination, then it is necessary that we allow it to be chosen by the one who has most experience in this matter. If, on the other hand, we leave the decision to the majority, then we must not expect to get to the most beautiful place. We must decide for the one or for the other, and thus either forgo the pleasure of becoming acquainted with the most beautiful place in the Upper Engadine, or give up the other pleasure of discussing the resolution as to our destination.

The practical application to the question of the constitution of the State is easy. It offers us the choice between *democracy* and the *Just State*. If we choose that, we must abandon this, and vice versa. If we make the will of the majority the

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highest law, then we should not expect, or even demand, that justice should become supreme in the State. If, on the contrary, we wish that justice should be carried out in the State, then we must submit ourselves to the authority of those who are sufficiently educated for the office and who are lovers of justice.

We can reduce what is essential in this consideration to a very simple thought. Either there does really exist an ideal of justice for society —then the State ought to be ruled in accordance with it, independently of whether there is a majority whose will is directed towards this ideal ; or else there is no such ideal of justice—then even democracy cannot be such an ideal.

We can imagine only one evasion which the apologist for the democratic ideal can adopt. He may say, there is certainly an ideal of justice for the community, not dependent upon the decision of the majority. But this consists just in the fact that the majority in the State ought to govern. Thus whatsoever the majority may hold to be good, justice is realised in so far, and only in so far, as its will is carried out. Democracy and the ideal of a just society are *one and the same*.

Then certainly the question cannot even arise whether the people is sufficiently educated in order actually to wish for justice. For by the

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bare fact alone, *that* the majority did will something, this would be characterised as right.

But we must be clear that if this conception is to be consistently held, there is no longer any possibility of *limiting* the obligatory character of the decisions of a majority by just demands of a higher nature. The incompatibility of the democratic principle with the maintenance of such higher demands of justice is thereby acknowledged. The question, whether the people is *ripe* for democracy, then loses all its meaning, and the only form of this principle, which can still be held, appears to be what Ku-Hung-Ming calls "The Religion of the Worship of the Mob."

But even if, in order to save the principle, this consequence is accepted, it remains a fruitless evasion; it only leads to further contradictions. For assuming that there is such a principle of justice, according to which the demand of the majority in the nation is always right, the validity of this principle itself would yet be independent of the will of the majority. And we should thus have a principle of justice which must be certain *per se*, and must be beyond question, even before we had a just ground for establishing the democracy, and thus for appealing to the judgment of the majority. Thus we should not leave it to the will of the nation whether it wishes to govern

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itself or not. On the other hand, the principle in question demands that we allow the will of the majority to decide without restriction. If therefore the people decided to lay down again the government and to revert to an autocracy, then this very decision, which annuls the democracy, must be binding, which is a contradiction of the principle.

If we consider the history of Modern Democracy, we meet frequent examples of this contradiction. At the outset, the classic record of the birth of the democratic age, "The Declaration of Human and Civil Rights," reveals to us the contradictory amalgamation of the rights of personal freedom there enumerated, with the proclamation of national sovereignty. This document is the solemn confession of the idea of inalienable fundamental right, and at the same time hands over these rights to the chance of the decision of the majority.

A sense of this incompatibility finds expression in an interesting provision of the American Constitution, holding good even to-day, which allows a judicial veto against laws determined by Parliament, when their application would infringe upon those fundamental rights.

It is noteworthy how little we are conscious that by this recognised legal limitation of the

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national sovereignty, the democracy *par excellence* has annulled the democratic principle, as such, in that it bows to a higher principle of right.

That this recognition of a higher principle of right was not pursued into its wider consequences, and that generally speaking men were not really conscious of this contradiction, is explained, first of all, by the actual lack of content of the rights of liberty there set forth ; and, on the other hand, by their enthusiasm for the *idea* of right, to which they rendered homage in their struggles for freedom, and for which, just because men did not understand how to grasp its content, the democratic principle was substituted, and now receives all the glory of that exalted idea.

When later the great Socialist movement of the nineteenth century allowed the empty ideology of freedom to lapse, and enthroned the really pregnant and fruitful idea of social equality, the democratic theory had for so long become a rigid dogma that social democracy took over, without closely examining it, this heirloom of the bourgeois ideology, which it formerly treated with so much derision. Doctrinaire prejudice made it blind to the contradiction which had now become ridiculous, and which is glaringly manifest in the very name “ Social Democracy.”

The political chaos, which this confusion of

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ideas brings upon the nations to-day, forces itself everywhere upon the keen observer.

We have just experienced one of its most tragic examples. I am thinking of the principles of justice, in the name of which President Wilson entered into the war. He himself once expressed in a formula the fundamental thought, which all his speeches more or less clearly and transparently paraphrase, and has expressly declared that this formula embraced all his endeavours. It was in his speech at the grave of George Washington, on July 4, 1918. The formula runs : “*The reign of law, based on the consent of the governed.*” The overstraining of the democratic principle certainly cannot be more palpably manifested than is done by this formula. We have here two maxima, which are independent of each other, combined in one formula. First, the conformity of the government with the will of the governed, but, on the other hand, its conformity with law. Wilson’s practical politics really came to grief on this contradiction. He had an ideal of justice, independent of the will of the majority, namely, the ideal of the League of Nations, based on the principle of the equal rights of the nations. For this ideal he entered into the war. He desired a just peace, in which was neither victor nor vanquished. But as democratic President he was

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neither able nor willing to withstand the will of the people whom he led. And his ideal efforts for justice were defeated by this will.

Another example is given by what recently occurred in Belgium. A long controversy has raged there as to whether women's suffrage should be introduced. This would have been entirely in accord with the fundamental demands of the democratic party. But now another party, the Clerical, took advantage of this demand. The Clericals knew that they only needed to give women the suffrage in order to have the State entirely in their hands. The Democrats saw that, and therefore opposed the introduction of women's suffrage. For besides their democratic ideal they had also a wholly different ideal in view, the ideal of spiritual freedom. And when they saw that they could not combine the two ideals, they opposed the democratic demands of the Clericals, and actually carried the proposal, that only *those* women who were either widows or mothers of fallen soldiers should have the suffrage.

The recent development of democracy in Germany affords also interesting examples of what I would illustrate here. The question before all others was the important decision as to whether Germany ought to sign the Peace of Versailles. What attitude did the Democrats take to this

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question? If such a question were actually to be solved by carrying out the will of the majority, then the Democrats must have recognised it as right to sign the Peace. But they voted against its being signed. And they did this because they evidently had in mind a completely different ideal of the future of Germany than the democratic one, an ideal with which the signing of the Peace seemed to them to be inconsistent. And—and this is especially noteworthy—even when they were outvoted, they did not change their position.

If the democratic principle were really determinative, we should, in truth, have no guide at all for forming a judgment upon such questions. We should have to wait for the judgment of the majority. But then how should this find expression, seeing that the majority itself is made up simply of individuals? We might just as well—indeed, we *must* ultimately—count with buttons for what we ought to decide. There would not be anything like a conflict of opinions, not even a conflict of the opinions of the majority and the minority in political questions, if there were not already presupposed another principle as determinative for the decision of these questions, according to which the individual decides in giving his vote.

After all, then, even the victory of the democratic doctrine in the present time is only an out-

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come of unbelief in the ideal of justice, an ideal which at the outset we are not able to defend by logical theory, and respect for which then finally vanishes more and more completely even in practice.

Because, as we persuade ourselves, there is no objectively demonstrable ideal of justice; therefore—so we conclude—the judgment of no individual can be taken as a universally binding standard, but, setting aside all such preference, the judgment of each citizen must have an equal share in the shaping of the general legislative judgment. Hence the fundamental demand of democracy, *the principle of political equality*.

I found recently, in the book of a German professor, this deeper ground of his democratic standpoint expressed with commendable clearness. He said: “In the eye of the State all citizens must be equal, without reference to the conflict of their world-views and interests. The State should not arbitrarily distinguish one of the world-views which are represented in it, and, adopting this as its own, oppress its opponents, or even merely exclude them from the government.” Here we have the contradiction once again palpably before us! If every preference of a world-view—nay, even of a view of the State, for as to that alone is there a question here—were an *arbitrary* thing; if

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for the State none of the mutually conflicting views of the world, held by its citizens, should be distinguished, in the sense that the government made this world-view its own, and administered its office in accordance with it ; then, surely, that professor's democratic world-view, which is expressed in this axiom, has no right to claim preference above any other, and so should not serve as a guide for the constitution of the State. Thus the argument in question directly refutes itself. We may choose a form of State, such as we desire, since we prefer it to others ; we may associate ourselves with a world-view, or even with a view of the State, in opposition to all the rest, which we exclude—in fact, we must here make our choice and our decision. However we desire to organise the State, in the conflict of world-views, as in the conflict of interests, one party must give way to the other. And for the decision of this conflict we need a principle, an axiom, which distinguishes the one side from the other, if the decision is not to be left to a mere test of power.

It is feared that every such distinction of a world-view, every preference of a particular party, leads us back to the oppression of all the rest, and so to autocracy and despotism. But this apprehension itself only issues from that unbelief

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in an objective right, in the possibility of knowing, free from any arbitrariness, what is true within the domain of right. If there is such a truth, and if we distinguish it in the sense that the State is to be governed *in accordance with it*, then there can be no question of autocracy or despotism. For here one will does not oppress the others, but right prevails over all self-will. Democracy, on the other hand, leaves the decision to the will of the majority, which may by chance take this form or that, *and thereby withdraws it from right*. At the best it leaves it to *chance* whether the will of the majority which is being formed is tending toward right. There is no ground for assuming that this will of the majority will agree with the demands of right, or even for regarding it merely as probable. For that we should have to assume that insight into right is so far manifest that it needs no special training of the understanding for its attainment, and no special training of the will, to ensure that its action shall be determined by this insight, when once it has been gained—an hypothesis the optimism of which sets all experience at defiance.

And then, too, a glance at history teaches us—if we are at all able to look at history with clear vision, instead of allowing our penetration to be clouded by any theory—that all the fair hopes

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which have been built upon democracy have not been fulfilled. Democracy has not, as we were promised, brought to us peace, nor freedom of thought, nor social liberation and the general harmony of interests. But, unfortunately, democratic ideology dominates men's minds to such an extent that the impartiality, which enables us to learn from history and from experience, has been lost. This fact just shows how theory is much more powerful than all the teachings of experience. Even the Bolsheviks, about whom we may think as we will in other respects, but to whom we cannot deny the merit of having in practice made a complete break with the traditional form of democracy, even they propagate their own ideas by means of a democratic doctrine, and believe that they cannot forgo this sanction. It is true they distinguish the "true democracy" from the false, the proletarian democracy from the bourgeois. In reality they only weakened in that way the impact of their own ideas. For what is "true democracy" other than the *restriction* of the "true" political ideal to the unrealisable condition of its agreement with the application of the majority principle?

So something like the "true democracy" seems to have been behind the efforts of the friends of reform, which have resulted in the founding of one

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of the youngest of the Swiss Parties, "The Swiss League for the Reform of the Transition Period." The way in which this new League fixes its political aim is characteristic of the ingenuousness with which such efforts, well-meaning in themselves, are organised to-day. The fundamental proposition, with which the new enterprise introduces itself at its first public demonstration, runs as follows : "*A democratic constitution based upon the principle of justice must guarantee the realisation of just aims.*" That a constitution based upon the principle of justice must guarantee the realisation of just aims is a thesis the banality of which has at any rate the advantage of being unassailable. That, on the other hand, a *democratic* constitution can guarantee the realisation of just aims is an assertion which, by its doubtfulness, is at any rate secure from the danger of banality. The duplication of guarantees which is there proclaimed is, however, an overstraining of the good intention, which avenges itself in that it incurs the loss of *both* advantages, which the one and the other of the demands combined in it could claim for itself.

If, without any bias, we take an historical survey in order to discover what organisations of a political nature have attained lasting success, we

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find two above all which may in this respect be typical for us, although we must first of all inquire how far they do owe their success actually to their form, and not perhaps to the particular nature of the aim in whose service they have stood. They are the organisation of the Catholic Church and the military organisations of the great States of modern times.

If we inquire upon what their success rests, we reach, in fact, the result that their success depends not so much upon the aim as rather upon the method by which they have worked for the realisation of their aim, that is to say, in the *form of their organisation*. This was so fittingly devised that, as far as was humanly possible, it excluded chance, and guaranteed an ever closer approximation to its aim. We must ask ourselves by what means it has provided this guarantee. This question is not difficult to answer.

The essence of the organisation, indeed, consists just in this—the leaving of the result aimed at in no way to chance. And this was achieved by not leaving the measures adapted to its realisation to the will of the members of the organisation, but by constituting a will which should be independent of the opinion and will of the individuals, and be determined simply and solely by the idea of the result to be aimed at; and which, in particular,

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should have at its disposal the *means* for bringing it about, guided simply and solely by the idea of the result striven for ; and that means again, independently of the opinions and wishes of individuals which chanced to be formed in the organisation. After all, we can only call an association of men an organisation, according to the measure or degree in which, in this manner, it makes the aim for which it strives independent of the will of its members. And the examples just given are actual examples of organisations in the meaning of the word just indicated. A real organisation cannot be built up on democratic lines, and those two examples, which are typical through their success, are, in fact, just the opposite of a democratic organisation. In them the dominant will is that of the man who has the best insight into the aim striven for, and who with greatest discretion commands the means for its realisation, and into whose hands these means are entirely given, so that he is able to dispose of them over the heads of individuals. In short, these organisations work according to the principle of *leadership*.

It is said, indeed, that leadership and Democracy do not exclude each other, since the mass, even in Democracy, may be influenced and guided by its

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leaders. We may even hear the opinion that really it is only through Democracy that the way becomes free for individuals to prove their capacity for leadership. Democracy is the great arena in which the victor proves his fitness.

In order to avoid confusion of ideas at this point we must, above all, distinguish between the *actual* leader, as we find him in every community, and the man *who has the call* to leadership, the man who is marked out by the fact that he has the clearest insight into the aim and the best will for its realisation. And we must ask ourselves whether the leader, who in Democracy leads the masses, is the leader by vocation, or whether there exists at least a probability that the leader by vocation will under a Democracy actually become leader. We have no reason for holding the probability of this taking place, but we have every reason for holding the contrary. For the qualities upon which the talent of *actually* forcing oneself into a leading position are different from, and not easily combined with, those that are requisite for filling such a position *well*. Other circumstances than the vocation for leadership decide who comes to the front in a Democracy. The methods of *demagoggy* decide that—that is, the misleading of the masses by persuasion—and the man who is most skilful in the use of these methods, who knows how to

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flatter the masses most adroitly, who promises them the most attractive advantages, and who carries on the war against his rivals most unscrupulously, has the best chance of becoming democratic leader. But not even personal efforts are necessary for beating opponents out of the field. It is sufficient that chance has thrown into one's lap outward gifts of fortune in order to buy public opinion. For at a time when the art of reading is sufficiently widespread, the monopoly of the Press answers the same purpose as the confessional amongst peoples of less education.

Experience, too, confirms this. The types of Clemenceau, Erzberger and Northcliffe are more characteristic of Democracy than the types of a Wilson or Max von Baden. Success falls to the share of the one—quite apart from all unavoidable fluctuations in Democracy—to the others, not even when they actually do obtain leadership. The methods by which they lead are incompatible with what alone could assure to them the rule over the masses in a Democracy, and on that rock they come to grief.

But whence, then, arises the deception by which Democracy commands itself as a method—nay, as the only method possible—of bringing the fit men to the front?

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A fallacious perversion of ideas is the cause, a playing upon words, which might seem harmless, and the disentanglement of which might remain a matter of academic interest, if the suffering peoples had not to bear its consequences. In Democracy, it is said, there is the same possibility of rising for all who are qualified—indeed, it depends only upon the fitness of the individual how far he is successful in rising to leadership. Well, then, if we see the essence of Democracy in the exclusion of all privileges which are independent of personal fitness, then Democracy is the Just State, and the conclusion becomes indisputable that in Democracy leadership falls to the fittest. But, thus understood, this thesis becomes a meaningless tautology. It expresses a triviality, whose aspect of practical significance is only surreptitiously obtained by the fact that into the word “Democracy,” here used in a very misleading way, there is involuntarily insinuated the generally used idea, according to which it denotes a particular form of *constitution*—such a constitution, that is, as rests upon the principle of political equality, and so of popular sovereignty.

The mere distinction of these two ideas certainly does not of itself prove that a State which satisfies the one idea could not, or indeed must not, at the same time satisfy the other. How the matter

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stands in this respect we have already decided. Examined closely the two demands are inconsistent. Democracy, understood as the State form of political equality or of popular sovereignty, denotes the constitutional equality of the share of *all in the nation*, with respect to co-operation in the formation—and that means here the *election*—of the government. On the other hand, Democracy, understood as the exclusion of all privilege apart from personal qualification, means the equality of the participation of *all who are equally qualified*—in other words, the *exclusion* of all *not sufficiently qualified* from co-operation in the government. Thus the two demands not merely do not coincide, but they absolutely exclude each other—unless it be that we commit ourselves to the fiction of a people consisting of none but those who are equally qualified, a proposition under which evidently our problem of the rise of the most qualified would lose its interest.

If, then, for once we allow ourselves the dangerous use of language which constitutes the spell of the democratic theory—it is, of course, a demand of courtesy to meet one's opponent in due form, and to speak with him in his own language—we shall readily agree in the cry which demands Democracy in the name of justice, if only, at the same time, we are allowed the paradox of rejecting, in the

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name of Democracy, political equality (and with it popular sovereignty and the principle of the majority). Only so shall we be consistent democrats. And in reality it makes no difference whether we clothe this consistency in the more polite form just expressed, or whether, coming back to ordinary language, we openly declare that, for the sake of right, we must reject Democracy.

Democracy is not the great arena from which the best men come forth as victors. It is the fools' stage on which the most crafty or best-paid chatterbox gets the better of the nobility of character which relies only upon the goodness of its cause.

If we come back to the question, by what means we are to recognise the man who is qualified to lead, and who is thus called to be leader, I have really given the answer already. The qualities which distinguish the leader by vocation are clearness of insight into the right aim, strength and purity of will in the accomplishment of this aim, and organising skill in the control of the means for its realisation. Since the means by which political ends must be brought about are human powers, the knowledge of men in particular is requisite for the organising skill of the leader by

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vocation. Not only knowledge of other men, but also, and above all, self-knowledge—that is, knowledge of the limits of his own personal ability, of his own powers, even of his own moral powers. For the leader must know his own limitations in order that he may be able rightly to make good the lack of his own powers by drawing in those of others. And a man of less gifts, who is aware of his own limits, will be a better leader than the more gifted man who is self-deceived in this respect.

How, then, are we to conceive the organisation of the State in order that in it the will of the leader by vocation makes the decisions? Are we not dependent upon the happy chance of such leaders being given to us in the State? Or can we perhaps do something to ensure at least, *if* they are there, that the leadership in the State shall devolve upon them, or perhaps even to ensure *that* they are there?

A glance at history teaches us once more that these are no utopian ideas. I have already mentioned the most imposing example. It is that of the Catholic Church. But we find also other examples that it is not utopian to aspire to something of that kind, even in the State. In ancient Rome the Cæsars had the right of adopting as their successor the one who seemed to them the

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most worthy, and the same was true in China in the olden days. It is by no means the case that the leader by vocation has to be dependent upon the favour of fortune in order to come to the regency, or indeed that he could gain it only by a *coup d'état*, setting himself up as a dictator. But it is possible to have *organisations* which automatically allow him to rise to leadership. And just as little is it left to chance whether in the State we have at our disposal the *men* for whom we should desire this promotion, for the leader by vocation is no other than the best for the time being among the men of a generation. We are not dependent upon ideal-men, not upon demi-gods, from whom we are to expect the salvation of the State—if only care is taken that the best man for the time being, whom we are at all able to find, comes to the leadership. The Catholic Church affords us the pattern of such an organisation as automatically permits the best man (in the sense of the aim of the organisation) to become leader. And the possibility of such arrangements is in no way dependent upon the particular aim of the organisation. We can imagine everything that is essential in those arrangements quite apart from this aim, and as devoted to the service of another, indeed a directly opposed aim. The only question is that of creating a method of automatic selection, which

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brings the men, who have to be taken into account for the vocation of leadership, to a suitable education, and step by step sifts out from them the best trained, until we bring the best to the top. That we are to-day entirely lacking in such arrangements is not due in any way to the difficulty of devising or carrying them out, but it is due to a superstition which dominates the minds of men—the superstitious belief in the dogma of democracy as the only saving truth—which cripples our power of political thinking, and thereby hinders us from even *seeking* for such arrangements. This superstition—which, as we saw, is the natural result of unbelief in the possibility of knowing the truth as to what is right, and which therefore betrays reason and justice into the hands of chance and self-will—this unworthy superstition alone is the cause of the political confusion which is hurrying the peoples of Europe, with all their culture, ever deeper and deeper into the abyss. This superstition is, in fact, more unworthy and more disgraceful than that of the Middle Ages, upon which we are wont to look down with contempt. For the religious superstition, which at that time dominated Europe, contradicted, after all, only the laws of Nature, which we must learn to know, in order that we may shake it off. The political superstition, on the contrary, which dominates

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Europe to-day is an immediate contradiction of simple logic. We need no knowledge of Nature or of history to recognise it as madness. What is needed is nothing more than simple courage to think consistently. The superstition of the Middle Ages was harmless, at least in so far that the phenomena of Nature, as to the essence of which men, in their ignorance, deceived themselves, went on, after all, undisturbed in their course, uninfluenced by human folly. But by this modern superstition all justice in human society is destroyed, and the very springs, which might be the source of better things, are blocked up by it.

These springs lie in the depth of the human spirit, in our own reason—our capacity for knowing the truth of right. This knowledge certainly is not self-evident, and that is the reason why it is misunderstood. We reach it by the path of straight and sound thinking. But for the man who, under the influence of a perverse theory, has lost this power of thought, that knowledge may become completely obscure. And so it may become obscure for an entire age, if the perversion of thought is sufficiently widespread. No less a judge of men than Dostoevsky has calmly stated: “The ant knows the formula of its nest, the bee knows the formula of its hive, but man does not know his formula.” What is usually held to be a

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defect of the animal here seems to be positively a distinguishing privilege of man : the satisfaction of not being burdened by reason and responsibility.

This age revels in the perverse feeling of this liberation, for it has been, in the literal sense of the word, brutalised by its own poets and thinkers, —whether under the sublime mask of religious humility, in the affected self-depreciation of spiritless apostles of love, or in the open cynicism of that self-derision which vents itself in the helpless outcry of a German journalist, “Cursed be God, in that He has given us understanding.”

The political form in which this spiritual degeneracy expresses itself is Democracy.

We have spoken of a distant aim, but yet we must make it clear to ourselves if we desire merely to aim at it in a rational way. We must, indeed, be all the more clear about this aim, the more remote it is and the more difficult its attainment. For how else are we to discover the fitting means of overcoming the difficulties that lie in our way ? We come back now to this question : What ought we, what can we do—we who are so far distant from the aim—in order to bring it nearer ? We need to ask this especially as we are all living in a democratic State, in a State life which is not guided, as once was the case in the age when

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princes were absolute, by the will of one individual. When that was the case, it might be hoped that, by means of instruction and through the convincing power of the truth, he might be inspired to use the large powers he possessed in order, by one bold and effectual decision, to realise the great aim. Things are not made so easy for us. What takes place in a democracy, even every change in the form of the State, depends upon the relative power of the parties in the State. And if we desire to transform the democracy into a just State, we can make use of no other means than those which are used by other parties in the democracy. We must enter into a struggle with them for power. And for this we need a party of our own. A political party is, indeed, nothing else than an organisation within society for the purpose of influencing the State, and thus indirectly capturing power in it. I say, we need a party of our own in order to transform the democratic State into a just State. It is not a matter of any consequence whether this is done by adding a new party to those already existing, or by entering into one of these parties, with the hope of reforming it according to our views. For in order to transform an already existing party in such a way as would be necessary for the struggle for a just State, powers are surely necessary which far surpass

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those at the disposal of an individual. In any case, we need an organisation of our own, even if it be only as a body of picked troops, within one of the existing parties, in order to develop it fully into a genuine and effective party of justice.

How are we to organise in its turn this party of justice or of reason, whichever term we use?

This question is answered by considerations similar to those we have already advanced in making up our mind as to the desirable organisation of the State. I do not need, therefore, to begin by proving in detail that, if we would proceed rationally, we shall organise this party, not in the sense of the majority principle, but under the principle of leadership. Question the teachings of history, and of your own experience, as to the development of parties, which indeed to-day are almost all organised under the majority principle, and you will be obliged to note failures similar to those which we were able to observe in the history of States. It is only a happy chance if such a party is not forced aside from its original aim, and alienated from the spirit of its founders. Who likes may join it—he is indeed welcomed without examination—and if he possesses industry and skill for it, can plot a diplomatic game of intrigue, with the result that at the next party

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meeting the whole programme is turned upside-down. And even setting aside all intrigue, by which the party could be forced aside from its aim, yet at least the tactics of the party, the choice of its means is left to the greater or less prudence of the members of the party voting upon it. And we cannot say that those who honourably profess the programme of the party will surely be prudent enough to discover the most suitable ways and means of serving the programme ; and still less can we say that the majority of the members of the party will be ready to make sacrifices in order to apply these means with all their power, even when their personal inclinations stand in the way of the programme. The politician of reason, if he has the option of organising a party, will begin quite differently. It is to be added that the Party of Reason certainly has the task, although only after it has gained the power, of transforming the democratic State into the just State. And expediency will certainly suggest that the Party should be so organised, as far as possible beforehand, that when once it has gained preponderating power in the State, it can forthwith use this power in the sense originally striven for, and consequently in such a way that it can pass over without changing the form of organisation into a government organised on rational lines. That it can only do

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when within itself the principle of leadership has already been accepted.

Here everything depends upon our proceeding, from the very beginning, with the necessary courage of consistency, in the practical carrying out of the idea. Every attempt, arising from mistrust of the principle of leadership, to make concessions to democratic prejudices, and also to seek controlling arrangements for superintending the leader, every such attempt can only tend to paralyse the strength of the party and to frustrate its success. For either those who manage the controlling arrangements for superintending the leader have less insight into the leader's calling, or are less energetic than he is in insisting upon their fulfilment, in which case they can only hinder him and impair the achievement of which he would otherwise be capable. Or they are really called to superintend him, and to keep him within bounds; then they are themselves, as the more qualified, in truth the leaders by vocation, and should, logically, themselves undertake the leadership. For the apprehension that a misuse of the absolute power of the leader might turn aside the Party from its aim—for this we must make allowance in another way. The only way in which this can be done is by perfecting the methods of selecting and training leaders. We are already

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convinced of the fact that we need not wait until a man with a genius for leadership falls into the lap of the party. The only thing which can ensure the stability of the organisation is to be found in the personal qualities of the leader himself, above all, in the qualities of his character—that is, the strength and purity of his will. For if he is lacking in these, all gifts of intelligence and of skill in organisation are of no avail. There is in that case no guarantee that these gifts—the greater they are, so much the more—shall not be misused for evil ends. A sufficiently strong and pure character will far sooner be able to make good a lack of intelligence—either by the perfecting of his own training or by drawing upon better powers—than, on the contrary, the most conspicuous intelligence can make good a lack in the region of character. To this point those who have at heart the stability and certainty of aim of the Party of Reason must direct their whole attention.

That is all well and good, you will say, when we already have this Party. But how are we to begin? As yet there exist no organisations which ensure the rise of those who are called to lead. In order to create these we surely need already a qualified leader. Are we to elect him? No! Evidently there is, for the beginning, no other

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possibility than that he who has the call to leadership himself recognises his call, and on the ground of this personal vocation undertakes the formation of the Party. If, in order to avoid the appearance of this being an autocratic proceeding, he wished to postpone the founding of the Party or altogether abandoned it; if he wished to wait until a body of followers comes together of itself and calls him to leadership, he would thereby rather prove his lack of vocation for leadership. That he is lacking, for the rest, in personal completeness for the right exercise of the leader's calling, should not hold him back. For there is no other way of procuring qualified leaders for the organisation except that, at first, one less qualified makes a beginning and looks round for better successors, and by educative work does all that he can to train up these.

Finally, we must here notice an essential distinction with reference to the organisation of the Party of Justice, on the one hand, and that of the Just State on the other. The analogy which exists between the two is limited by the fact that the leader of the Party lacks just the chief means for the leadership of a strong organisation which is at the command of the ruler of the State—that is to say, the external power, which the State

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possesses in the form of the military and the police, is a means of compulsion to which there is nothing corresponding in the Party. This external power is indeed plainly a monopoly of the government in the State, and is thus withheld from the party, so long at least as we do not imagine a conflict of parties in the form of civil war, but only a conflict carried on by outwardly peaceable means. The only power which can give the leader of the Party a certain substitute for the external force which is at the disposal of the ruler in the State is the power of the *confidence* which his followers place in him. But, that we may be subject to no disillusionments, we have to consider in due time how uncertain a power this confidence is, and how easily it fails when put to serious test.

It will help us to be clear upon this point if we compare the chances of the Party of Reason, of which we are now speaking, with those of a party which stands for an aim which has nothing to do with justice, which does not rest upon grounds of reason, but upon authoritative decisions. Even such a party, which can work according to the principle of authority, has no other resource than to work without the means of external compulsion. But it finds a substitute for this in the principle of authority itself. There

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is a great distinction between authority and the confidence which we demand in the organisation of reason. For authority, by its very nature, demands *blind* following. It rests upon belief in the infallibility of the supreme authority or its representatives. The authority is not in danger, as is the leader of reason, that when insight on the part of its followers fails, they will cease to follow. For in the former case the reason for following does not lie in the free consent of the individuals, but in the blind belief that one's own reason is not sufficient, and that therefore unconditional submission to authority is necessary. But where, notwithstanding, authority has reason to fear that faith in it might be shaken, and obedience to it might be withdrawn, there is always still left for it liberty to diminish somewhat the stringency of its demands, and of so far adapting itself to the weakness of its followers as the case plainly requires. All its demands, indeed, rest, according to the hypothesis, ultimately upon personal will. They can thus also be changed at will if a higher aim demands it.

The leader of Reason is not in this happy position, for the demands which he represents, and from the representation of which alone he derives his claim to confidence, are demands of Reason. They claim universal validity and necessity, and it

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is not possible for him, without entirely surrendering them, to abate anything from them in order to accommodate himself to the weakness of his followers.

And the organisations based upon authority have yet another advantage, which ensures the fidelity of their followers. Authority frees those who are devoted to it from the painful toil of personal thought as to what it is right to do, and thereby meets a strong and widespread inclination. Indeed, it goes much farther even in such accommodation, since it frees men from the burden of personal responsibility, by means of the system of tutelage, which is inseparably connected with it. Experience teaches us that men are ready to make every conceivable personal sacrifice rather than to assume, and actually to bear, the burden of personal responsibility. But the leader of Reason must appeal to the personal thought of men in order to find and retain a body of followers. And he cannot release them from their personal responsibility for their decision to become adherents. Experience, too, confirms this, that it is so much easier to follow an authority than the leader of Reason.

What now is the result of this for ourselves ? Evidently this, that in default of external means of compulsion and authoritative claims, the leader

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of Reason, in order to discharge his task, is dependent upon a much greater personal readiness in his comrades, upon a much stronger voluntary attachment in his followers, than the leader of any other organisation. For the strength of this voluntary attachment must make good the lack of both the external force of compulsion and the inner force of authority. The readiness upon which he is dependent must be so great, or at least be able to grow to such strength, that it not only attains but surpasses in its influence all that an organisation of compulsion, and an organisation of authority—all indeed that the two combined can attain—by means of the force at its disposal.

Is this not too extravagant a conception? It is a desperate situation, surely. What is needed here is, in fact, the courage of despair.

It seems a paradox that an organisation in which human dignity is at stake, and which aims at winning for each one the right of rational self-determination, that this “Organisation of Freedom” reveals itself as the most deterrent institution of force into which free men can ever have been expected to enter—as an institution which reduces its members to mere instruments, and which, only because the lack of means of compulsion forbids its leader to use force, is dependent

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upon an all the greater goodwill on the part of its members. But have we duly considered what our dignity, what the ideal of rational self-determination demands of us? Of *us*, I say, we who are not living in the just State. We can only reasonably attribute to ourselves rational self-determination in so far as we actually do allow ourselves to be determined by reason, and that means, above all else, by insight into our duty. But our duty is, before we do anything else, to do what is possible for us in the realisation of the condition of right, and thus to come together in such a Party of Reason as I have described. Adhesion to this Party is not at our option, for the aim of this Party is not one taken up arbitrarily; it is immediately indicated to us by duty. It is the fault of the individual himself alone if he does not of his own impulse follow this duty. He has himself impaired his worth and trifled away his liberty. He has not been robbed of it by the leader, who, so far as he is able, applies the means of the organisation in order to keep him to the fulfilling of his duty. For the leader himself only does his duty when he does not shrink from seeming tyranny when it is necessary to rule. We could speak here in a better-grounded and truer sense of *compulsory service* than where this name of honour is applied to organised

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murder. And if we realise what means of force were there applied, it will no longer seem something unheard of, to apply corresponding means, so far as that is possible, in the service of a task, which with better—nay, as things now are—with sole right, can claim the name of duty.

II

EDUCATION FOR LEADERSHIP

A Lecture given at the Central Institute
for Education and Instruction, at
Berlin, on April 14, 1920

II

EDUCATION FOR LEADERSHIP

I HAVE been asked to speak to you upon the Education of Leaders. Perhaps it is the first time that this subject has been chosen for a public lecture. It seems to me to be a significant fact for our time. The call for leaders becomes ever clearer and more urgent.

Until now it has certainly occurred to few that the problem of the *education* of leaders should be taken seriously. It is a thought unfamiliar to our time, which does not look at things from the point of view of reason. If it is brought before it, it rejects it as a paradox. It regards it as a presumptuous invasion into the mystery of the origin of great personality.

In dealing with it, however, to-day, we may take courage from the fact that the greatest minds of all ages are in close touch with this thought, and in part have concerned themselves with it very seriously—and not merely theoretically.

How are we to interpret this call for the political leader? Is it the expression of a fermenting force,

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which is impelled to seek someone to restrain and lead it? So was it when Blücher, at a day's notice, placed himself at the head of an inspired and aim-conscious army, as the embodiment of its resolute will, and, as its commander, carried out only what the spirit of the army itself demanded. So was it when Luther, by his declaration of war against Rome, suddenly became the hero of the oppressed classes, who looked to him to free them from the fetters which they had long ago found intolerable.

It is not so in Germany to-day.

Certainly we do find, even here, successful organisations, which for the time being bring to certain groups a sense of relief, and from which they expect a decisive improvement. But these movements have not the confidence of the nation. For the nation, having no conscious aim of its own, is expecting help from without. At the same time, it has no sure standard by which to judge political events, and so is unable to express a decided judgment upon them. The nation is uncertain and perplexed. Through years of intolerable stress it has been looking for a change, though without definite hope; at every sign of an alteration it wavers between confidence and mistrust. Its situation seems so desperate that it cannot be worse, that perhaps any turn of affairs

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may bring at least the chance of an improvement. On the other hand, its hopes have been so deceived, and selfish interests have so made it their sport, that it looks upon each new experiment simply as a manœuvre in favour of big business.

This unhappy perplexity arises not only from the fact that for years one crisis has followed another in the nation, until its energy has failed and its nerve is out-worn ; but it has allowed itself to be so enslaved by events, because spiritually it had nothing to set against them, and was unable to interpret their meaning. “ The facts of life,” says Ku-Hung-Ming, “ are like the Egyptian Sphinx : if its riddles are not rightly answered, it devours men and nations.”

This same perplexity, which has laid hold of the wearied nation, really sways also those men who at times emerge as leaders in brief political uprisings. The most that they are able to do is to make use of an already tried organisation, and to astonish the world by a swift conquest of power. The capital of the German Empire is conquered in a few hours by a handful of adventurers ; a revolutionary army of sixty thousand men is raised over-night in disarmed Germany. Officers of State are turned out, Ministers fall. But what then ? Instead of a programme which can be carried out, empty or meaningless promises. Instead of pur-

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poseful energy, compromises which cover a retreat. And so the machinery which has been got up, if it does not become a mere apparatus of destruction, at last turns out to be a mere scene-shifting. The powder has been shot in vain, the nation's burden of debt has become still heavier. One more illusion is destroyed. Greater mistrust is sown against future undertakings. And the bitterness of national feeling crushes idealism still further, and at length produces a fatal disgust at the meaninglessness of all political effort. Rest is the only thing that is desired. We long for order. The cry for a leader is as yet only the cry for the strong man, who will undertake the responsibility of ensuring life for the citizen.

Must we lay the blame for these conditions upon the political immaturity of the nation? Some will answer "Yes," others "No." Some point to the fact that the firmness and efficiency of English politics is due to an uninterrupted self-education of the nation during centuries. There is there a democratic tradition and culture. Others appeal to the fact that the French nation, held in nonage under the Bourbons, found at a leap the path to freedom. Fortune gave them tribunes of the people at a favourable hour.

More sober seems the judgment of those who

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do not believe in the pre-established harmony which finds expression in the optimistic saying: the great time produces the great men. But is it so much more realistic to expect that the nation will become wise through the experience which it gains in political activity? Are not those who hold this opinion also, in truth, optimists? Or whence do they know that the nation will have just those experiences which are of use to it, and not such as will drive it into the abyss? And even if the experience should in itself be sufficiently favourable, who is to guarantee that it will be rightly interpreted, and will be used for the well-being of the nation? Where democratic commonwealths have developed happily, there we should first of all ask, To what is this happy development to be traced? Under simple conditions and in small communities, where, as Rousseau says, "the people of the country decide their affairs of State under an oak-tree," there the sound instinct of the people may suffice to order their simple affairs in a simple way. But as soon as the nation grows in numbers, and its transactions become more complex, it is no longer a question of the vote of each honest man. Even the most extreme democrat does not think of imposing upon the whole nation the responsibility of complex affairs of government, and still less of allowing the nation to partici-

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pate in a training corresponding to such responsibility. A democracy has never been based upon this presupposition. And we should be driven to despair if no considerable political achievement were possible without this presupposition. The calling of the politician demands more special knowledge, more concentration and devotion than every citizen can afford in addition to his business vocation. Leaders have been raised up in democracies at all times. And if things went well, it was due to the fact that suitable men were at the head of affairs. The characteristic feature of democracy, as compared with the autocracy which it conquered—this characteristic feature does not lie in the fact that force is not administered by individuals. It lies in the way in which these individuals rise to power. In the autocracy the leader is imposed upon the nation—if it is a monarchy in form—by the accident of birth. What creates the need for a democracy is the revolt against the arbitrary government of a ruler placed over the nation by chance. In the democracy, on the contrary, promotion is freely given, as a matter of principle, to the man who is qualified. The ruler fills his office by the free consent of the nation. By this principle democracy commended itself to the awakening peoples. The fanaticism of the wars of religion revived under

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this battle-cry. Democracy, indeed, in its intention, wills the government of the fittest. Only, since it gave no content to the freedom which it allowed to the citizens of the State, it has all along left the way open for the demagogue. There is no need of a democracy, nor indeed of any artificially devised form of State, in order that there may be a leader at all. The relation of the actual forces alone is decisive for that. And in the natural order the greatest force conquers. On the other hand, democracy does not suffice to ensure that the fittest becomes leader, for in the democratic party machinery the selfless spirit of the genuine republican does not necessarily prevail.

In that I am saying nothing new to democrats. Everywhere we are beginning to see the necessity of deepening and purifying democratic public opinion. We have rightly conceived the impossibility and the superfluousness of a uniform political schooling of the whole nation, and have more and more taken up the founding and improvement of courses and schools for the training of teachers and leaders for the political parties. But has democracy itself a clear idea of what it wants with such leaders? Is it seeking for officials, at the best directors, who may be again dismissed as soon

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as they cease to please the party in authority? For what end do we train specialists if afterwards we merely hand them over to the sway of the non-expert multitude? And are our party schools and similar institutions to-day at all fit for training expert politicians? I, at least, up to this hour, know no institution in which expert knowledge in the political sphere is aimed at with anything like the seriousness and unflinching strictness as is technical expert knowledge in the schools of technology, or strategic knowledge in the military colleges, the so-called war academies.

To my mind the reason seems to be that we are not clear what expert political knowledge really demands. We have lecture courses upon all possible questions of home and foreign politics. We introduce discussions and a more regular study, but less with the aim of arousing those who take part in them to independent judgment upon political problems than of making them party agents, who know how to answer, confidently and smartly, the objections of every opponent. But is the training of party agents of itself a training of experts in politics? It will be admitted that the aim is here conceived too narrowly. Will it be better, perhaps, if we extend the plan of instruction, and widen and deepen political knowledge? But of what use is the increase of political knowledge

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to the politician if he does not at the same time gain a standard by which he may sift and value the content of experience? If he is not merely to take this standard, without criticism, from the dogma of his party, it is essential that his insight should be developed, and especially his philosophical insight—that is, insight into connections and norms.

But with that, however, we have only trained the political *judgment*—a result which might perhaps satisfy us if it were important that we should obtain teachers, who could then teach in the political institutions better than their own teachers. But politics is an art, and not merely a matter of knowledge. The politician must have learned how *to act*. How much more the political leader, who indeed shows himself as such only by leading others in action. One becomes a political leader only by the superior power of his will. The education of leaders, therefore, must be, first and foremost, an education of the will—that is, a systematic development of their energy to its highest achievements in strength, certainty and independence. The educational influence which springs from instruction, however well it may be conducted, is not adequate to the fulfilment of this task. We have not as yet the most primitive beginnings for this serious work of the training of the will, which must hold the central place in the ~~education of~~

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leaders. It would seem that we have not yet become clear, even, as to its importance and necessity. Our age prides itself upon the fullness and acuteness of its skill in psychological observation, but, in spite of all the historical examples to the contrary, we still seem, within the region of politics, to regard a man's character as having its strength and tendency rigidly determined once for all from his birth, so that its fixity cannot be affected even by the continuous and systematic influences of a rational training.

Political activity, and with it the art of politics, is, however, of a special character. In a certain sense, the art of politics is the highest and most comprehensive of all educational arts. It is the art of shaping human life on a large scale, the art of forming or transforming human society. It thus falls within the wider sphere of the art of organisation. The political leader must not only—like the teacher—be himself able to awaken forces and to lead the forces he awakens, but he must also understand how rightly to unify all these forces and to bring all their weight to bear at the right point.

The modern parties do more and more organised work just with a view to the insufficiency of mere enlightenment and education. They care for the growth of the party—that is to say, for the means of power. They think little as yet, it is true, of

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providing means by which those who are fitted shall control the administration of this power, even within the party. We only need to remind ourselves of the fate of a personality like Friedrich Naumann, who, in spite of his brilliant endowment, the popularity and power of his gift of speech and of his rich experience—nay, in spite even of his tireless devotion to the cause of his party—was made its president only a few months before his death. And just as little do we think of securing for the leader, once he is recognised, an actual following, which, indeed, is always in question, so long as his better insight may be made ineffective, even in the most important decisions, by any accidental majority. Just think of the momentous decision involved in the fact that, at the very first meeting of the German Communist Party, the wish of the intellectual leaders, Liebnecht and Rosa Luxemburg, to return to the course of parliamentary activity was frustrated by being simply outvoted by a majority under the influence of a demagogue.

What the nation, and indeed each party, needs is *rulers*. Teachers, educators and administrators are not rulers. A ruler is one who with insight into what is politically worth striving for, and with an eye for what is politically attainable, combines the firm will to pursue unmoved the

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aim thus determined for him, and who also knows how to make prudent use of the right means. But does not this demand do violence to reality? Does not this heaping up of superlatives make the ideal ruler wholly utopian? Our appeal to great statesmen of history, like Pericles, Julius Cæsar, Charles the Great, Elizabeth of England, Henry IV of France, William of Orange, the Great Electors, George Washington, is rejected. It is said that in these cases we are dealing with genius or with happy constellations of the historical situation. Well, then. But what is the age to do to which destiny denies such genius? Is it to fold its hands and let evil take its course, instead of, at least, out of the existing imperfect forces, making the less imperfect available by means of education? Should not perhaps that very thing, which, as we regard it to-day from a distance, has worked as chance in producing great political results, be attainable by means of systematic work? Ideas as to the nature of political genius are for the most part very confused. Though we may recognise for the poet and the founder of a religion the absolute necessity of a natural gift, which cannot be replaced by any training of the will, yet the scientific investigator can master his subject by method and industry. In how much higher measure the statesman, for whom the most im-

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portant matter is the application of insights and capacities to a region of facts, which may be mastered by application and circumspection. That this assertion is doubted, is due chiefly to the fact that we have worked in this sphere with too little method, and have gathered almost no experience. For myself, I maintain that the chance, to which we have so complaisantly abandoned this field, can be limited to the *single* happy chance, that at some time a man resolves—really resolves—to set on foot the education of rulers.

This assertion is not so hazardous as it may appear at first sight. For we do not say that we shall succeed in educating a qualified ruler in a definite space of time. He who begins this work is perhaps still far removed from being the perfect model of a political educator. But it is sufficient that, in the choice of his pupils, he has regard only to men who are highly gifted both physically and mentally, and that these, taking advantage of his experience and depending upon a better training than he could give them from his own resources—that these continue his educational work in order, by the application of improved methods, to bring their pupils to a higher standard. If thus we think of pupils strictly selected, and of a consistent method of training perfected in the course of time, then Plato's thought of the

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education of the wise as the education of future rulers loses the odium of fantasy. Plato himself was educated by Socrates ; he in turn taught Aristotle, who then became the teacher of Alexander the Great.

I will try, as far as time permits, to lay before you the plan of such an education. We are not speaking here of the education of leaders for this or that sphere of life, but of the education of political leaders. What in general holds good of these can easily be transferred to the education for leadership in other spheres.

The first thing which must be made clear in the question of the education of leaders is, that in it we are dealing with a training which is specialised, not less—indeed, as matters now stand, even more—than in the training for any other vocation. It will not suffice us here to train personalities, in themselves qualified and vigorous, in the hope that they will then surely hold their own. Lietz has always held the hope, in connection with his rural educational homes, that his pupils would some day become qualified leaders of their nation. In that he started from the right consideration, that because of their privileged position it was the duty of the pupils of the higher schools,

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as holders of the so-called higher professions, to be the first to accept political responsibility. But in this he overlooked two things. First, that the general harmonious training and sound education which he gave his pupils did not suffice for this end ; and—that is the second thing—even could not suffice, because he did not receive his pupils into his homes with a view to their being trained as leaders. For the restriction, which the plan of education demanded as to its matter, required for its completion that it should be restricted to only suitable pupils.

Who is the suitable pupil ? From what point of view is the selection to be made ?

I have already referred to the fact that the political leader must be distinguished by deep and clear insight, by a strong and pure will, and by skill in the choice and manipulation of political means. The training of these capacities presupposes no extraordinary talents. They may all be developed to any height we please by sufficient care and skill. Only two presuppositions are essential. The men who are to be worth such a training must bring to it strength and refinement. Strength *and* refinement. Without *strength* they will never possess the firmness to take upon themselves the necessary education to its full extent ; and still less will they have the steadfastness to force their way

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through all hindrances and adversities to the aim which they know to be right, their political ideal. Only the vigorous man can bear isolation without losing his energy. Without *refinement* a man is not able to be educated. He does not heed what a superior has to offer him. He does not watch against his shortcomings. And the beauty and perfection of others is not taken by him, as a matter of course, as an example. If he reaches an influential position, he has not the eye for imponderables. And his clumsy hand shatters what his understanding rightly designed for the carrying out of his work. Men are the material of the politician. The art of dealing with men cannot be fixed by formulæ and applied according to a scheme. On the other hand, one who wishes to manage men according to his plans, should not be dependent upon having to learn their character by subsequent experiences. He must be able to divine with certainty another's mental habit from looks, from a word accidentally dropped, from a custom in itself trivial—of course, not with the harmless certainty with which Prince Lichnowski believed that he could deduce Lord Grey's love for peace from his passion for fishing.

But is not this demand for strength and refinement an impossible one, since the two characteristics are mutually exclusive? The condition

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certainly did not run: Strength or refinement, from which it might perhaps be thought that the strength of one man should pair with the refinement of another. It is, however, not only possible for strength to be combined with refinement in one man; it is indeed essential, in order that he may not fall a victim to the defects of these virtues. For strength which is not curbed by refinement becomes *brutality*—that is, blind violence. And refinement, which is not sustained by strength, becomes *sentimentalism*—that is, weak sensitiveness and blind complaisance.

Where the character is not modified by the combination of these two qualities, it is possible for brutality and sentimentalism to unite, and there crops out that disgraceful mingling of bare-faced violence with mendacious sentimentality which we experienced not long ago in one of the leaders of the Berlin *putsch*, whose so-called “smartness” managed, thanks to the sudden attack upon the Government, to rekindle the political revolt in Germany. But his sentimentality prevented him from obeying the order to requisition from the Imperial Bank the necessary supplies for the Government he had enthroned.

It is not an isolated case in our political history; indeed, it seems to me that the fatal combination of uncontrolled strength with uncontrolled sus-

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ceptibility, that the wavering to and fro between the poles of brutality and sentimentalism, is the inherited evil of Germans, which, alas ! not without reason, has drawn upon them the name of barbarians.

Where the qualities of strength and refinement are lacking, nothing can take their place. Where they are present, they may be destroyed, and therefore need special care. Strength may be destroyed by lack of discipline, refinement may be lost through lack of taste. These precious qualities, therefore, must be guarded from early youth. Even though they do not at first unfold themselves so noticeably that we can be sure of their germinating—in our selection we must always allow for blanks—yet we shall do well to make the selection at an age at which the disintegration of the original powers has yet spread as little as possible.

So far I have spoken of the indispensable preliminary conditions of the future leader's capacity of being educated. Let us now turn our attention to the positive tasks of this education.

The English owe their political success to their sound nerves. A man like Bismarck was able to compel sleep at any hour of the day he pleased. Julius Cæsar saved his life at Alexandria by swim-

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ming. The freedom from habits and artificial stimulants, which is so very important, can only be preserved by the man who controls his body as a flexible and capable instrument. By organised care of the body—by *gymnastics* as the Greeks called it, *sport* in the English term—a man should become master of his body. It is not necessary that the politician should be an athlete. But surely it is important that he should have an intimate knowledge of his body and its capabilities, so that he may act accordingly, and by the rational use of his physical powers free himself from being the victim of circumstances. Otherwise it happens, as it did recently with the general, whose insatiable political ambition forced upon the nation five years of mortal endurance, and who, before the parliamentary investigation committee, ventured to excuse his not being able to hold out until the afternoon because of fatigue. Mirabeau, by nature a giant, wasted his physical powers with such frivolity that he robbed himself of the power to guide France in her hour of fate, and so became, in truth, guilty of treason against his country.

We must not undervalue the educational significance of sport, together with physical training, for the education of the will. Nowhere can courage and confidence be so easily tested and applied as

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here. It is of no avail to talk nor to point to lack of opportunity. Here there is no indecision as to the choice of means. The test of courage and endurance is always so simple that they must be manifest if the assumed physical and moral powers are actually there.

As to the precise *instruction* of the future leaders, it is organised according to the natural stages of mental development. The decisive principle for the training of the intellect is that of truthfulness. To the unfolding mind nothing should be presented as something to be learned which it is not yet able to understand.

The first stage in the course of instruction is that of intuition or object-teaching, since the mind is first of all aroused through the senses. Exact training, which is believed to be exclusively associated with theoretical physics, begins at this stage, and indeed it must be so. For the capacity of precise observation, the loving absorption in phenomena, which is necessary for later studies, may not be left—even on grounds of economy of power—without exercise until the mind readily turns its attention to the systematic connections of things. The institutions started by Lietz marked a new epoch for this chapter in the education of leaders, and to such institutions we should

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appoint teachers of the stamp of Raould Amundsen, who conquered the South Pole, not as an adventurer nor even as a scientifically trained naturalist, but with the thoroughness and genuineness of the observer, to whom his senses afforded a completely trustworthy picture of Nature and man.

The mind, as it advances, works up into experiences the material given by intuition. This is the beginning of systematic scientific work. And I certainly maintain that the training necessary for the future politician at this stage is not training in the humanities—at least, not in the traditional sense of the word. Truly humanistic training is only assured by a thorough course of teaching in mathematics and physics. Rightly understood, humanistic training means the development of the spontaneity of the human mind. Spontaneity, under personal control, is at this stage only possible in the clear and simple methods which mathematics and natural science have worked out. Only by systematic pursuit of these sciences, based upon the evidence of mathematics, can the feeling for truth, which lives in every sound mind, become strong and proof against the attacks of caprice and scepticism, which always spring from undisciplined and fruitless efforts of the mind. Only in the healthy atmosphere of mathematics and physics can the future politician gain that honesty

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of thought which is necessary in order that he may not be "got at" by the tricks of diplomacy.

We may perhaps be surprised that training in mathematics and physics is to be preferred to training in history. For does not *history* offer just the material on which the future politician should be trained? But history in itself offers us only facts. The study of these facts gains true educational value only from the point of view of standards—that is to say, it can only be really fruitful when the man has formed for himself standards of value, thus only at a riper age. The presentation of the material of history at an earlier age, therefore, can only aim at turning to advantage the receptivity of the child-mind for facts and satisfying its need for hero-worship. Just here, however, there is a danger, which is far too little heeded, but which should not be overlooked in the training of a politician. The habit of a prevailingly historical mode of consideration, the diversion of interest to the deeds of bygone generations, all too easily stunts the fervid activity, and the creative impulse of the pupil, since the power of inspiration is exhausted in enthusiastic hero-worship.

In saying this, I am far from wishing to underrate the study of history and its value for the politician. I am only opposed to teaching in history which

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believes that it can give insights, which, however, at this stage will at the best be received only as information, and in that way will lose their educational value.

One striking example will show how fruitful history might be for the more mature mind, and it will show also how little the power of judgment is developed by the traditional way of teaching it. The World War, through which we have come, together with its causes and effects, finds an astonishingly far-reaching analogy in the Peloponnesian War. Our historians and statesmen, who for centuries have derived what they called education from the study of classical antiquity, show no trace of having used this fearful warning of history, or even of having merely noticed it.

Understanding of the culture of the present day can only be gained on the basis of training in mathematics and physics. This is indeed indispensable. Not, primarily, because technique is to-day one of the most potent factors of social life. Far more, because in questions of culture the conflict so easily degenerates into mere empty talk, if we are not in a position of being able at least to form a judgment upon the problems of definite epochs of culture which can be scientifically grasped. It is mere empty talk—not to speak more strongly—if one undertakes to demonstrate

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the downfall of the West just by the opposition of ancient to modern mathematical thought, and in doing so reveals a superficiality—nay, an ignorance—with regard to the simplest problems of mathematics, which marks not only the intellectual decadence of the author, but also of the public which allows its horoscope to be drawn by such ingenious amateurs — a support of his thesis such as certainly will scarcely be in his mind. If a politician is subject to the influence of such an infectious disintegration of the mind, he cannot steer his course as leader. He needs for his world-view a solid foundation established in exact science, because only so can he keep true to his aim, and not be confused about it by the chance tendencies of his time.

When the pupil, by his familiarity with the methods of investigation into mathematics and physics, has become aware of the possibility of knowledge which is independent of the senses, then it is necessary, at the third stage, to direct his mind to the formation of judgments as to the aims and tasks of human action. When the pupils learn to associate the results of historical and social science with the idea of standards, then they reach a point at which they can estimate the value of the mastery of social life, so far as it is under the laws of Nature, from the point of view of the ideas of

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justice and culture. A mind for facts alone hands the politician over to the danger of a drifting opportunism. For such people, principles are transformed to what Balfour recently characterised as "the epitomising of an opinion as to a method, by means of which one wants to get out of a given situation." On the other hand, idealism, without the knowledge of reality, makes men visionaries. The man who has no mind for facts cannot gain admittance to the stage of public life. If, by the accident of birth, a rôle is allotted to him there, he may destroy men and nations. The Hohenstaufers paid for their lofty dreams not only with the blood of their last descendants, but they handed the German people over to the guerilla warfare of its princes. And do we not find the same romanticism in the overstrained ambitions of the last Hohenzollern, who, not satisfied with military supremacy on the Continent, involved his people in conflict with the strongest naval power, and so not only suffered shipwreck with his own politics and brought about his own downfall and that of his dynasty, but also dragged the German people into the abyss with himself.

The entire theoretical training can only serve the immediate purpose of developing insight. It does not lead us a single step nearer the real aim

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of the education of leaders, the formation of political character, if it is not used at the same time as a method for the *education of the will*. No insight is of any value in so far as a man is not capable of acting in accordance with it. But action is a matter of the will.

Three attributes of will are essential : Strength, in order to be in earnest about its purposes ; alertness, which guards from becoming the slave of habit ; and purity, which places strength and alertness at the service of true public aims.

Strength of will shows itself in the capacity of controlling the impulses of the senses. It can only be developed by exercise. The natural field for this exercise is regular daily work, in which, above all, endurance and patience are tested. Gifted men, from their disregard for mechanical details, easily fall into the danger of not carrying out their plans fully, either letting them remain unfinished or handing them over to others. Instead of excusing such remissness with the word "genius," we ought rather to call it a want of seriousness and sense of personal responsibility in regard to one's work. It has occasionally been said of me that I degrade my philosophical *seminare* (training college) to mere practice in speaking. I certainly take the point of view that men are only ripe for a serious interchange of

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thought when they are able so to speak that at least they understand themselves, and, further, have sufficient mental discipline to complete a sentence which they have begun. For those whom I am bringing into personal co-operation I find myself compelled to a still more primitive instruction. I arrange for exercises in the difficult art, when people are mutually introduced, of giving the names loudly and clearly. And I have courses of writing, because it seems to me unworthy to waste my time in the study of hieroglyphics. I am unable to understand the attitude of a man to his work who writes out communications, which he regards as being worthy of being written down at all, in such a way that the reader must begin the puzzle with the interpretation of the characters.

In the case of a teacher who begins his teaching with such courses, I should not regard it in the least as a sign of disdain towards his pupils, but quite the opposite of that—that he wishes to help his pupils in mastering the necessary conditions of success in their work. The schools of to-day, alas! give no guarantee that these first conditions for the success of all the higher efforts of the mind are being fulfilled. In any case, there must be a serious fault in the fundamental design of our schools, which are saturated with instruction in language, if the pupil, after twelve years' attend-

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ance, leaves the school, with his certificate of admission to the university, without being able to express the simplest thoughts intelligibly and connectedly.

In saying this I do not by any means assert that the conditions named are sufficient. Perseverance and exactness do not by themselves constitute strength of will. Just where we presuppose strength of will as an original capacity other impulses must be brought under discipline as well as inconstancy and indolence. Impulses are not originally really good or evil. Every strong impulse may turn out to good or to evil. Strongly gifted natures cannot be held in check by moral instruction, but we must allow their impulses a sphere of activity which is wide and healthy enough to give them free room in which to work, and which is still under the teacher's oversight.

The controlling of the life of impulse should not result in its being stunted. For since the will can do nothing but guide the play of impulses—giving free play to some of them and repressing others, according to their results—it is necessary that such impulses, as powers at the command of the will, should be present in the fullest possible variety and strength. It is therefore the further task of education, jointly with the training of the

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will, to bring the powers of the mind to rich and active development, so that the training of the will may realise its proper aim.

There is no strength of will where the life of impulse is so poor as to allow no strong temptations to arise. It rather consists in being independent of inclination, in the ability to take an objective attitude, and in the conflict of private and public interests to put personal concerns aside. I candidly avow that I do not regard as called to be leader of the foreign policy of a great nation the man who has to miss a Crown Council which is decisive for the outbreak of the war because he is just on his wedding trip. We may think here also of the tragic end of Lassalle, who by a love-affair brought upon himself a duel, which not only cost him his life, but also destroyed untold possibilities of a happier social and political development of his country.

To the objectivity, which expresses itself in the separation between what is essential and what is unessential, there belongs also that resignation which, as it looks ahead, comes to terms with the impossible and does not attempt to shake the unchangeable. This resignation is itself a creative act. It spares experiences like those of Epimetheus, and gives better chances of success in regard to what is actually attainable. The failure of many

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reformers and revolutionaries may be traced to the lack of this foreseeing resignation.

The political greatness of Lenin shows itself in the very thing which weak-minded judges call a readiness to compromise, but which really includes the art of making up one's mind to a renunciation, or, speaking mathematically, not wanting to combine two mutually exclusive maxima.

The demand for economy of powers must also extend to the economy of the will itself. This consists in freeing the will by sparing oneself resolutions. This can be attained, and therefore should be done, where regular recurring actions are to be expected. I will explain what I mean by a ludicrously simple example.

You may save yourself thought, and your teacher unpleasant warnings, if you constantly wipe your shoes at the house door, and not merely in wet weather. A Bohemian can be no politician, however charming his vitality may be.

Take another example, appearing less trivial only because of its results. Mommsen had not formed the useful habit of putting out his glowing matches, but, on the contrary, the dangerous habit of throwing them into the paper-basket; and in spite of a serious outbreak of fire, which threatened him and his works, he did not give up this habit. The result was a second fire, which

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resulted in our losing the fourth volume of his *Roman History*.

Alertness of character, by which we understand the ability to break off a habit, should naturally not be exercised in the case of habits necessary for constancy of work and development, but in the case of habits which are in themselves indifferent. Each man is by birth and education placed in a certain *milieu*, of which he slowly grows to be a part, and which by its permanence and exclusiveness saves him trouble and uncertainty. But out of that there easily arises a narrow-minded assurance, such as, for example, is displayed by a certain type of our officialdom, but, further, also a formality which we so frequently find if a member of the civilian class has political dealings with labouring men—a formality which has its ground, not in pride, but in clumsy awkwardness, and is no less fatal in its consequences. The difficulty of giving up habits is increased where higher values are associated with them. How we should admire Hindenburg, who, after he had grown grey in the service of the Prussian monarchy, placed his power at the disposal of a Government with which, from his education and career, he could have no sympathy!

Here the problem arises how by means of education we can best guard a man from the danger

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of allowing his private aims to determine his decisions. Should the future leader be removed as early as possible from his family, from his narrow birthplace, so that he may gain personal independence? Or should we allow him, as far as possible, to grow up in the surroundings in which he is placed by the accident of birth, because here the natural variety of life brings him into touch with reality? Well-grounded objections may be urged against the narrow atmosphere of educational institutions, in which, under their present conditions, the economic foundations upon which his own life and that of his fellows entirely depend are concealed from the pupil. And there is in addition the fact that, otherwise than in the family, the pupil finds himself the centre of all that goes on, and is in danger of making too much of the importance of his young life. These dangers, however, are not insurmountable if only we are aware of them, for the educational *milieu* can be arranged with sufficient variety, especially if the school itself forms part of a larger community, such as, for example, a settlement.

The point of view is altogether changed when we consider that we are dealing, not with education simply, but with the education of leaders. The education of leaders does not aim at a carefully balanced training. We have not to impart a

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general education in the ordinary sense, which later on gives equal chances of success in any kind of vocation which may be desired, but the entire course of training is to be planned from the point of view of the training of leaders. This at once means the rejection of teaching planned according to a scheme. The more general training which the individual receives must be guided by what is necessary for him as an individual, in order that his natural gifts and faults may be rightly adjusted, in view of his future political vocation.

All this leads immediately to the demand for a special plan of teaching, different from that of the ordinary school. But since it is our purpose, over and above mere instruction, to *teach* leaders, it is no sufficient objection to allege the drawbacks of a boarding-school education, in view of the necessity of an educational *milieu* expressly adapted for the training of leaders. The decisive advantage of training in a community lies in the fact that it enables the pupil to realise the possibility of a society of men based upon a clear purpose. The confidence which arises from this impression is decisive for his later life as leader of a national group. He is to be taught for the special aim of helping to shape social life in harmony with ideals. Purity of the individual will, such as we may find flourishing under happy conditions in

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the atmosphere of a healthy home-life, is not adequate for the realisation of those ideal political tasks, for these tasks can only be solved by powers acting in concert; and it must not be left to chance that there are scattered individuals who are actually prepared for united action. Further, only an expressly adapted *milieu* affords the opportunity for thorough and all-round training in the *art of organisation*.

With this I come to the last of the three attributes which must be trained in the political leader, the art of using aright the powers that are available. Perhaps there is a fear lest the demands on education should be overstrained by our asking that it should also prepare for political activity from the point of view of organisation. For how is any educational *milieu*, artificially created, to reflect the diversity of political life? The analogy between the community which has an educational purpose and the communal life of the citizens of a State is naturally limited. But although the material which has to be organised cannot be forestalled, the methods of organisation may be developed and practised even in the educational community. The future politician must learn, before all else, to organise his own life, and that means to reduce to a minimum the sway of chance over

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himself. This implies that he shall live rationally. The victory of reason, which he thus experiences in himself day by day, strengthens his confidence in the victory of reason in greater affairs. History gives us a great variety of contributions under the heading, "Small causes, great effects." I remind you of the fall of Baron von Stein, and the injury which that involved to his efforts for reform. Baron von Stein gave the outward occasion for his dismissal because, carelessly, he did not guard an important diplomatic document from breach of confidence by the use of cipher.

In order to overcome chance we need that power of the mind which I might define as *realistic imagination*. Only the man who is able to realise beforehand, by the use of his imagination, a situation with all its details, who is able to look at the possible effects of a particular action on all sides, can take measures for bringing about the final result at which he aims. The words which Schiller puts into the mouth of Posa, at the time when the marquis is awaiting his audience with the king, are a wonderfully striking expression of the feeling of every truly political mind :

" What
Else is chance, other than the rugged stone
Which comes to life beneath the sculptor's hand?
'Tis Providence that gives occasion fit;
Man must shape it to his end."

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We must give the pupil opportunity of studying and explaining the results that spring from neglect. Examples, which he himself knows, must make it alarmingly clear how devastating are the reactions of thoughtless conduct, how dishonouring indeed it is to depend upon chance instead of one's own powers. A much-read author counsels the young people of to-day to devote themselves exclusively to technical callings, because our exhausted generation can make no real advances in culture. This advice is premature so long as we have not yet inquired how far the unfruitfulness and failure of present-day culture springs from lack of organising—and that really means technicalising—the life of each individual. When in the Austro-Serbian conflict on the evening of July 30, 1914, the strong German protest was made against the irresponsible playing with fire at Vienna, the Austrian statesmen regarded it as ill-timed to give up their night's rest for deliberation. Their sitting took place next morning, after the Russian mobilisation had in the meantime been ordered. The last weak possibility of averting the World War failed through the indolence of those statesmen. The attempt to seek the cause of world-catastrophes in such apparently insignificant connections is not only more instructive than ingenious analyses of the time-spirit, but also more

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fruitful, because it shows us where we must look for the remedy, and that the question is one of decisions to which the power of the human will is equal.

Certainly in our time, which has lost faith in truth, and even in moral truth, there is little prospect of the speedy victory of such a happy view of life, and accordingly little prospect of the beginning of an actual education of leaders.

This firm faith in truth has long ago vanished from our schools and colleges. From that direction we are not likely to find help. Our effort must therefore be directed to bring this living spirit of the love of truth once more into our public training institutions.

I am conscious that these words of mine have no meaning to one who has no perception of the sickly weakness of our time, the deepest essence of which I would denote by the word "Fatalism." My words have meaning only for one who, immune from political fatalism, sees in history the work of responsible men.

III

THE EDUCATION OF LEADERS AS THE WAY TO THE POLITICS OF REASON

An Address given at the invitation of
the "Freybund," in Berlin, on
November 7, 1921

III

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“It often happens that, where sufficient forethought has not been taken, all the greater qualities and achievements of men have been called forth.” Hugo von Hoffmansthal recalled these words of Goethe at the beginning of the war, and added, “That is our case.” I think, however, that it was clearly a case of our ruin.

Why do I tell you this? Because I expect you to ask what I understand by a Politics of Reason, and I want to give you, at the outset, an example of its opposite.

The marks of a Politics of Unreason are—thoughtlessness, and, in its train, aimlessness, indifference, fatalism and, finally, faith in salvation by miracle.

The marks of a Politics of Reason, therefore, are—forethought, clearness of aim, constructive purpose, sense of responsibility and valiant trust in one’s own strength.

From that point of view no one would like to rank as an opponent of the Politics of Reason,

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although, certainly, to-day little may be heard of it. The very name challenges contradiction—a Politics of Reason! Does it not sound like the assumption of having the only saving truth? Does it not feel to us like the chilling intellectualism of the Age of the Illumination, if Politics is once more to receive her instructions from the Reason?

I ask you, just for the present, to put aside these commonplace phrases, so familiar to us all. Do not at the very outset stumble at a word which has evidently become suspect only through a false usage. The misuse of a word does not give us the right to deny the good thing for which the name originally stood. Before we criticise let us rather try to gain a clear idea of the nature of the Politics of Reason.

Even without deeper philosophic discussion we shall be at one in this: that the politician's business is not the exploration of superhuman wisdom, but the exploration and shaping of the world in which we live; that it is necessary to know, and to apply, the laws which govern the natural world and the laws according to which we ought to act.

We may know the truth which gives meaning and aim to our life, and we may know the means by which we can attain this aim in the world of Nature. We can do all this by the aid of our

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reason, which is indeed simply the capacity of knowing laws.

You will perhaps reply that the capacity of knowing such truth may certainly be a profound and wonderful gift, but that the Politics of Reason, if it aims at such wisdom, is very remote from us. Of what use is the investigation of laws, when what is wanted is to get potatoes into the market for the people, when the currency problem is pressing for solution, when Russia is making its peace with capitalistic Western Europe, and the breaking off of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance is imminent? I realise, with you, all the difficulty of these questions, but I maintain that we should not face their solution so helplessly if we made the Politics of Reason our business—nay, I go farther, and boldly declare that if politicians knew and respected the laws of the practical reason, then there would be no distress for the means of life and no “clearance sale” of Central Europe; then Upper Silesia would be German and Kiaotchou Chinese; then the Anglo-Japanese Alliance would of itself have lost its meaning; it would long ago have merged into the League of Nations, and Russia would perhaps be presiding over this League of Nations.

I shall not be expected, here and now, to prove these assertions in detail, but you may reasonably

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expect something else—to learn the aim which the Politics of Reason strives to reach and the way which leads to this aim. I will not entirely forgo proofs. But instead of using scientific abstractions, I wish to appeal to your natural feelings and to your sound human intelligence.

The difficulty of coming to an understanding really lies in the fact that the aim of the Politics of Reason is derived from an *ideal*, the supremacy of which is guaranteed by no authority and upon which historic tradition has shed no glory. A practical politician like Bismarck never knew this difficulty. He sought his aim, not in an ideal derived from a philosophic theory of the State, but in the task set him by the King of Prussia. For the fulfilling of this task he employed, without reserve, every available force, thrusting aside, without scruple, everything which threatened the supremacy of the Prussian Crown.

Now, after the overthrow of his creation, his figure is obscure in history. His course has been abandoned. Like heavy seas, the problems of national and international politics break over us. But we have neither time nor leisure to examine into their significance. As the captain of a ship, who has encountered a cyclone, can no longer hold the intended course of his voyage, but must consider only how to avoid the centre of the storm,

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so we to-day are avoiding the bankruptcy which threatens Europe. It is a dismal spectacle, this beating about of the ship, when no one knows whether the next moment will not draw us down into the whirlpool.

But far more dismal is it to explain the occurrence of such political cyclones as an inevitable fate, and to commend as the last word of wisdom the advice of Bismarck, "What else is one to do, if one is on a voyage, than steer according to the wind?"

I pass no judgment upon those who to-day are managing the affairs of our Government, especially since they have no real liberty of decision left to them. I turn to those amongst us who do not bear any direct political responsibility, who are free to think. We have come in a wrong direction. It is necessary to determine a new course. But we shall only succeed by first of all discovering the pole star by which our course can be shaped. If we neglect to do this, then our determination of the fresh course will be haphazard, and our fate as uncertain and threatening as before. As we cannot become sailors without having learned how to determine our position by astronomical methods, so we are but political charlatans if, as guides of the destinies of

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nations, we believe that we can dispense with the preparatory philosophical study which alone can give us clear aims. We must first of all return to the simple and great ends which reason sets before us. "It is not sufficient," as Fries says, "to seek for a social order which we arbitrarily take to be rational." But we must discover the law which is independent of all caprice, in accordance with which certain actions are prescribed, others are rejected. To the question whether this path is not too long, I can only say: "It is the shortest, because it is the only one which leads to the aim."

But how many have already sought the right way? How many have held their way to be the only right one? How, then, are we to decide?

Let us make an attempt.

If man observes the world about him he soon comes to see an order in the play of forces. He sees in the natural world that the strongest force for the time being prevails. Now there are politicians who stop at that stage, and who put forward the fine theory: "God is always on the side of the big battalions." According to that, the salvation of the world depends upon the increase of the birth-rate and upon the engineers and chemists. Those who find no help in so crude a principle oppose the primitive realism of this conception by an

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idealism which measures, not merely the forces that control the course of things, but also their value. But just here a fatal error often creeps in, which leads to a false position. We have beside our knowledge about Nature the conviction of a higher world. We believe that in this higher world eternal Goodness reigns. Now if we transfer this religious conviction to Nature, in which the strongest force for the time being has the victory, we arrive at the idea that in Nature the Good always wins the day. Certainly it is admitted that not every moment tallies with that view of life. But peace is found in the hope that *ultimately* all things are for the best. Such a faith certainly affords consolation; but would it not be better, instead of giving consolation, to forestall injustice by action, and to protect the good where it is helpless? What makes the Quaker worthy of respect is not the truth of his conviction, but the strength with which he is ready to make sacrifice for this conviction.

The following of the Quakers is small. Far more numerous are those who share such a view as that recently expressed by Rathenau to the Democratic Youth at Mannheim: "The condition of our preservation as a nation and as a unity is that we save and preserve our inner qualities." If Rathenau had instituted an inquiry at the

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meeting—What are we to understand by this saving of our inner qualities?—the answers, as is usually the case, would have been somewhat confused, the proposals not very definite. But, taking all together, one tendency would surely have been clearly seen, namely this: once more to promote the fostering of spiritual values in order to further these inner qualities. The things spoken of would have been: the deepening of sincerity which we need, the return to simpler life, the deepening of education by greater intellectual initiative, the exhibition of good national works of art, the helping of young people of talent—in short, the fostering of cultural values. And not only this; reference would have been made to the numerous clubs and associations which are earnestly working for this aim. What reflection upon spiritual values, and their furtherance through the combination of free fellowships, proclaims as the way of salvation, is perhaps expressed in the following sayings: First become something yourself! Make your soul, instead of mixing in, and being entangled by, the business of the outer world. Show your independence of the doings about you by fostering gifts such as have no market value.

This tendency to hold aloof, to cherish an ideal intercourse in a circle of kindred souls, is

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strengthened by another consideration. Man sees the life of society in the grip of a thousand organisations, permeated by numberless institutions, whose inevitable course he does not understand, the development of whose power fills him with wonder, but still more with dismay. He sees how men are caught up by this mechanism, serve it, suffer under it, and yet also gain their living by it. And the most tormenting thing is that he knows no clear answer to the question, Must all this be so? Is modern society only able to live when it brings together all its powers and fits them into a monstrous machinery? Does not this ingenious apparatus so entwine the nervous and spiritual force of men that the soul is starved and perishes, and finally men know nothing save business, prestige, and the intoxication of light amusement?

And since he finds no clear answer, the questioner saves his soul from the monster of civilisation, and flees to those who live quietly in the country. With them he finds rest, and the craving for beauty, and has freedom to satisfy his longing.

At the risk of seeming to be a pessimist, I confess that I have no faith in this method. Certainly there are many widespread associations which turn away from materialistic activities, and, in good faith, strive for a healthy and pure spiritual

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life; and I gladly admit that these associations accomplish much in which, under other circumstances, one might reasonably rejoice. But I question two things: I question the existence of the *freedom* for the development of culture which is here presumed, and, what is of more weight, I question the *right* of our age to foster such higher ideals of culture, even if this should be successful in certain circles.

First, as regards freedom. It exists so long as those all-powerful organisations, or rather their leaders, tolerate it. If the movement for the reform of life, for freedom of thought, becomes in any way inconvenient, if they fear that such movements may spread beyond the narrow range of the sectional activities of cranks, then the authorities raise their veto, and these enthusiasts must disperse. It is true that there are times when the ruling power tolerates such reformers, when, indeed, they are very convenient to it. It tolerates them so long as no member of their society is allowed any sort of authority over others. So long the ruling power indeed is ready even to support them. Prudence recommends that course. It is the tribute which rulers pay to the spirit of reform, in order that it may find an outlet, and so relieve a pressure which might become dangerous.

Let us therefore not speak of liberty. Let us

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use the word *permission*. The great economic corporations, the school administrations, the Church, even civil society, they all permit. They permit settlements and people's high schools to exist ; they permit Leagues for the Reformation of Economics, and Schools of Wisdom to be formed ; the publication of Journals on Art and Decoration ; lectures to be given on the characteristics of flowers, and speeches about the message of the woods. But they withdraw this permission the very moment when the real purpose of such centres of culture, the reforming of the souls of men, begins to influence the mind and to arouse the will of the people. Is it necessary to give further examples ? I remind you of the large number of ministers and teachers who, in order to save a good position, learned betimes to silence their convictions ; of the not less numerous women who, with their stronger ethical convictions, capitulated all the same before the threatening curse of social ostracism. Who does not know that even the mere communication of thoughts in the form of printed books—if it does not fall altogether under the brutal power of the Censorship—is dependent upon the power of money ? The freedom of the author, if it happens that the whim of his employer stands in the way, does not even extend to the point that he can choose for the

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printing of his works the characters which are current in other civilised nations.

In such and similar ways the opposition is still for the most part embodied in individuals. But the authorities have at all times introduced quite other methods if the danger increased. They have formed horizontal and vertical combinations ; the powers of Capital have combined with the Press ; even into the ranks of the Churches and High Schools, of the Army and of Justice, they have insinuated their agents and silenced the heretics.

And how shall one speak of the freedom of cultural development so long as there still threatens the possibility of *war*, which compels the cultured youth to exchange at a day's notice the service of the Muses for that of Mars, to destroy the works of culture, and to kill other men, who have been called to new creations of culture, or to let themselves be killed by them ?

How, indeed, shall one speak of freedom of cultural development so long as unrestricted travel and secrecy of correspondence, things indispensable for the *interchange of thought*, are not assured even in times of *peace* ?

It is said in reply : Still the good does live, and reforms *have been* carried out. Yes, indeed, but not because the idea itself has triumphed, but

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because amongst the authorities some have accepted the idea. Where, on the contrary, such protection has been lacking, the idea has remained without effect.

The Reformation was only able to take root in countries whose sovereigns granted it their protection, and even there it was repressed after the counter-Reformation had gained access to the courts. The "Kultur-Kampf" did not, as is often said, fail because of the spiritual power of the Church martyrs, but because of Bismarck's blunder in abandoning it just when its success began to be assured.

And does not the fate of unrestricted travel and of the secrecy of correspondence, which I have just mentioned, teach us how even benefits of culture, which seemed to be completely secured, can be torn from us when the economic and political relations, to which they owe their existence, become shaken?

I believe in the idea of culture, but I do not believe in its omnipotence. I do not believe it will restrain "men with the intelligence of foxes, sharpened by greed," from profiting by the sweat of others. And as long as some men are being cheated of their right to bodily or spiritual —whether it be that they do not recognize fraud or are helpless to prevent it—in short, so

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long as we suffer bondage and slavery to exist amongst men, we have absolutely no *right* to exert ourselves in the fostering of the "higher" blessings of culture.

When recently I visited my oldest friend in Berlin, I learned that, in spite of unwearied industry, with tireless energy at the age of 64, she was unable to afford more than 30 marks a year for her rent. This working woman lives with a lame man, whom she herself supports, in a shed which is unroofed by every winter storm. This woman, in spite of her readiness—nay, even desire—is shut out from any sort of participation in the benefits of culture. And that is no isolated case. There are here to-day in Berlin women home-workers who, for sewing slippers, earn an hourly wage of 90 pf., plus 22 pf. bonus. What is the splendid and well-arranged collection of casts of antique sculpture at the university to these women? What good can come from representations of Faust as long as in a German province the following order can be published?—"No Catholic is allowed to support the erection of a secular school. Anyone who does this makes himself, as a matter of course, unworthy to receive the holy sacraments."

And is it not sufficient to recall the one fact that up to the present, by the prohibitive arrange-

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ment of the leaving examination—up to the Revolution, indeed, by law—95 per cent. of the “Nation of Poets and Thinkers” are excluded from the possibility of going on to the higher professions?

I see these facts. They shatter the optimism of our enthusiasts for culture. Certainly these are not all inclined to the clear statement of the public prosecutor, who recently, in the Hölz case, made the classic observation: “If the idea were right, it would be more powerful than dynamite. It would realise itself, and there would be no withstanding it.”

I will gladly listen to anyone who can refute, or put a different interpretation upon, the facts I have brought forward. He would make it possible for me to study with more active sympathy the numberless programmes and prospectuses which I receive almost daily, and which with so much confidence commend the method of realising the progress of humanity by fostering culture.

Meanwhile I take a different view, and I do not know whether I have more reason for sadness or for scorn. For sadness: For I too appreciate the blessings of art and science. I, too, if I had free choice, would prefer a life devoted to their pure service. For sadness also, when I see how

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much good strength is wasted in the pursuit of pretentious aims, when surely even a small fraction of this energy would suffice to lay the foundations on which, not only these but even much higher aims would actually be realised. For scorn : For what is this claim to education but presumption and vain self-deception, so long as it rests upon so unstable a basis, and is only the privilege of a few who are favoured by the chance distribution of power ?

I see another way of saving our inner qualities, and that is, first of all, to create the *prerequisite* for a life worthy of humanity. This prerequisite is only realised when all have the equal right of satisfying their needs. Even to-day economic freedom and spiritual freedom are the privilege of those who have known opportunely how to obtain possession of power, or, still more opportunely, to choose their parents wisely. All others are their subjects. He who strives for the fruits of culture, but shrinks from breaking the authority of these lords, simply goes begging for his ideal. He dishonours himself and robs the ideal—which he is supposed to desire—of its worth.

The Politics of Reason can be no other than a Politics of Justice. To suffer no injustice, to stand by those who themselves are unable to

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protect their right, that is the task of this Politics. But to do this it must undertake the struggle for power, and bring its mighty methods, outer and inner, into the service of this aim. For as Kant said : " If Justice perishes, human life loses its value."

Having this end in view, many amongst you will assent to this Politics of Reason. But to many a one it will seem that the way here proposed makes the attainment of the aim very doubtful. The Politics of Reason wills the conquest of power. It will use inner and outer means of force. But are not those who have power to use such methods in danger of being *misled* by them and of losing the one means, the purity of soul, which guarantees fidelity to the aim ?

I admit the *danger*, but nothing more. If you give me such names as Tiberius, Robespierre and Lloyd George, I set over against them men like Marcus Aurelius, Cromwell, Lincoln and Lenin, whose purity of soul you will not deny. You will say : That decides nothing ; the danger is still there. Well, I merely reply : If you will not accept this risk, then you must choose a worse evil : the certain triumph of injustice.

But how does the case really stand with regard to the claim to purity of soul ? We shall agree

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that purity of soul is a matter for the individual himself. Here the principle, "Let each man mind his own business," actually holds good. No one is responsible for the soul of another, but each one for his own. But what does purity of soul really demand? It must surely evince itself in some way. It must guide the will. And this, too, will be admitted, that it must manifest itself by guiding the will to the *Good*. He has purity of soul who wills the *Good*—actually *wills*, and not merely desires or prefers, who loves Justice and does not tolerate Injustice. He who admits that purity of soul is a force attributes to it the power of *realising* the *Good*. But the *Good* is not realised by pious wishes, but by active exertion for it and staying the arm of Injustice. Who do you think is the more pure of soul, the man who leaves a defenceless horse, brutally whipped by its driver, to its tormentor, or the man who wrests the whip out of the hand of the brutal master? The man who in concern for the purity of his soul flees from the affairs of this world is doing all he can to forfeit this purity, since he is doing what in him lies to make evil men powerful. Confucius says: "He whose only concern is to keep his own life pure brings the great human relations into confusion. When the nobleman takes an office, he is doing his duty."

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I have admitted that the danger of a misuse of power exists, but I have not admitted that it cannot be overcome. Before, however, I show you how I think the danger can be averted, I will touch upon another scruple which you will have against my recommendation of the use of force.

You will say : Even assuming that all the offices of State were in the hands of excellent men, that legislation and police took care that crime was prevented, or at least punished, yet injustice would only be *outwardly* repressed ; the *source of the evil* would not be touched. The soul of the man who is prevented from wrong-doing is not thereby improved.

It is true the soul of the evildoer is not improved by his being deprived of the liberty of manifesting it. But let us, for the moment, leave the question of the soul of the criminal and remind ourselves once more of the question, What does purity of soul demand from ourselves ? It demands, as I said, that we ourselves do no injustice, and that we espouse the rights of those who are not able to protect themselves against the violation of their right. How such violation comes about is not, for the man who suffers from it, and for us, upon whose help he is dependent, of primary interest. If I chance to see that a family of six

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people is living in a two-roomed house, and one member is already consumptive, I do not trouble myself first of all about the soul of the landlord; I do not devote my time and strength to convince him of the infamy of his extortionate rents, and to induce him, of his own accord, to give up such exploitation; but I seek, if possible, to raise money, and see to it that the sick man is sent to a sanatorium and that the others have the right of preserving their health. Above all, I shall work to prevent such families being left to the chance help of individuals, and to secure the passing of a law to put down the exploiters of garrets and to remove the shortage of houses. As a politician, one must have the eye for what first wants doing. If the first step is wrongly chosen, all those that follow become uncertain.

The Politics of Reason demands, as the first step, the bringing about of just conditions in society by *external regulation*. Without such regulation, secured by force, all further steps which the politician may attempt are uncertain. I have already tried to show you this in the futility of our modern enthusiasm for culture, and in so doing have already given the reason why we *cannot begin with* ennobling the souls of men.

It is only possible to ennable the souls of men

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by education—in fact, if the education of humanity were to attain its aim, injustice would no longer exist in society. But what prospect is there for education so long as the State, which controls the work of education, is in league with the powerful interests which are ruling to-day, and which are directed to other aims than the rule of Justice? Perhaps you will point to the fact—as indeed the State itself is wont to do—that the reform of education must proceed apart from the State and be undertaken by private initiative. And so there emerges once more the idea of setting about the reformation of the souls of individuals, first of all in small circles, and then, by teaching and example, to extend it ever more widely, having nothing to do with force, and apart from the mechanism of rigid organisations. The picture is too enticing to be summarily set aside. Man *can* be educated—if we leave out a few sick and weak-minded folk, whose failure certainly does not count in view of the promise of so great a moral success. Moral progress will at first only be slow, but from generation to generation its speed will quicken. We shall learn from experience; careful methods will be evolved. How can better education and instruction fail to do their work?

But let us keep our goal in sight: It is hoped simply by education so to raise, not individual

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men, but *humanity*, that some day the power of the good soul alone will suffice to establish the rule of Justice in society. Let us now consider man as Nature makes him. He is furnished with good and bad qualities, which he has often inherited from his parents and forbears. But Nature refuses to transmit to the children the *work of education* which has been accomplished in their parents. In each young life the work of education must begin *afresh*, in order that in the interplay of impulses the ethical may gain the mastery. More skilful teachers will here and there gain swifter results, but the honest soul which they have established in their pupils goes with these pupils to the grave, and the work of education must begin over again in the succeeding generation. If for it there are no new teachers—for even the teachers must die—or if this generation refuses to be educated, or the skill of the teachers fails, then the new youth is at a lower ethical level than the earlier, and only the chance of more favourable circumstances can make good the failure.

The advance which is made in history, in the sphere of instruction and education, we owe to the legislators who have embodied in *organisations* the life-work of the great teachers and educators. That there were such legislators was, it is true,

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an accident—to that point I shall return—but nevertheless it remains true that without them the harvest, by which the civilised nations are being fed to-day, would never have been gathered in. Liberal-minded educationalists will have little sympathy with a character like that of Friedrich Wilhelm I, but they owe to him the introduction of universal compulsory school attendance, which saves the teacher the task of having to get his children together. The spread of the ideas of Pestalozzi was made possible in Prussia by the fact that the State, out of its small treasury of that time, granted exhibitions, so that young teachers could work beside the great educator. And perhaps the Revolution will lead to the publication of scientific history books, so that it will be possible for us to teach history and not fiction.

We stand, then, at the old position: the ideal protected by power. Only he who wills that power really wills the ideal. I say “power” (*Macht*), for this need not consist of crude violence; its way need not be through assassination and revolt. Even the Pacifist, who rejects such methods, can really be a good man, if only he wills power.

In society, power rests in the hands of the State.

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If one desires that the ideal of Justice should prevail, if, in other words, one desires that all should have the same possibility of obtaining well-being and education, then one must will the State as the guardian of Justice—that is to say, must appoint rulers who by their power secure social justice.

That is the Politics of Reason ! And now everything depends upon the question I previously reserved : How are we to *secure* such rulers ?

There comes to my mind a saying of an impetuous young Englishwoman: "Oh, Lloyd George ! He was my hero, and now I hate him." A less impetuous but more critical Englishwoman, long before the war, predicted the career of the English Minister when she declared : " He is not a statesman ; he is only a politician."

What we need is, indeed, statesmen and not mere politicians—statesmen who are not guided merely by the prevailing circumstances of the moment, but who subordinate circumstances to the aim. Who can supply us with these statesmen ?

Yes, who can supply them for us—if not Education ?

Are we not, then, involved in a hopeless dilemma ? The work of education can only be successfully begun when the new external order which it

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demands has been established. But such a new external order can only be the work of better-educated men.

Is there any escape from this dilemma?

I maintain there is, and I pledge myself to show it to you.

The way of escape would have been found long ago had men only taken the pains to *state* the problem in this definite form. But, in an atmosphere so clouded by passion, few are clear-minded enough to see that the first condition of solving a problem, in itself complicated, is *this*: to state the problem itself as sharply as possible.

On my way here, at a railway station one night, I met a good friend who, if such clearness of mind is the mark of a philosopher, truly deserves the name, although—since he is a hairdresser by occupation—no diploma has yet been given him by any faculty of philosophy. As so often in his earlier years, this man, sorely tried by fortune, told me of his grief, which, however, in his case was mainly sympathy for the misfortunes of men. “How are things to improve,” he said, “since men cannot become better until external conditions are better? But external conditions cannot become better till men are better.” And when we had to part, he added that he was afraid

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of losing faith in the word of Kant, which had always been a light to him : " If I could not believe that it is possible, by the simple moral law, to raise humanity to a higher level, the human race must become in my eyes an object of aversion and profound contempt."

One cannot formulate more clearly than in these words the problem in which the fate of humanity is involved. Allow me to develop before *you* the answer which, for lack of time, I must still owe to my friend.

Certainly it is true that a better humanity can only be built by, or at least under the protection of, those who can secure for men the assured right to such an education.

And, on the other hand, it is true that only those who are better educated themselves will realise this outer condition for a better education of humanity.

But where is there any contradiction here ? Only education can furnish the men who, by the creation of the necessary organisations, can prepare the ground upon which the general education of men can thrive. Does this mean that *humanity* must be educated before those organisations can be established ? No ; a sufficient number of men sufficiently educated for this definite task will be able to accomplish it ; and the education of such

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men need not come to grief on the obstacles which stand in the way of the education of humanity as a whole.

That is the great and fruitful task which is entrusted to education to-day by the Politics of Reason. General education will only be realised under the protection of the Politics of Reason. The education of political leaders must be ventured upon and completed before the Politics of Reason has arrived at supremacy in the State.

The scope of this education is limited. It does not embrace at the outset the training of more than a few young people who are sound in body and mind. It does not aim at the harmonious training of every good capacity, but of such as are necessary and sufficient for the definite vocation of the politician.

Education for political leadership has an aim all the more clear and defined, as it is based upon the philosophic theory of the State. It is in that way related to the old Platonic ideal, which bases its hope upon the fact that the philosophers will concern themselves with the State or that the sons of the rulers will be lovers of true philosophy.

To most people the Platonic ideal now seems to be worthy of a Platonic reverence. It has been

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thrust aside as an assumed Utopia in favour of other movements which are, in truth, more utopian.

One thing I admit. The realisation of the Platonic ideal, of entrusting the ruling of the State to the Wise, is bound up with a condition without the fulfilment of which it has no practical significance. If we are to educate leaders for the State, we must be agreed, and that upon a scientific basis, as to what really constitutes political wisdom. As long as philosophic science was unable to lay down for us the principles of the theory of the State, so long the education of political leaders remained without a clearly defined aim. But to-day science is giving this answer. The Platonic ideal has thereby become a practically soluble task. The fruitful co-operation of political theory and educational praxis may begin.

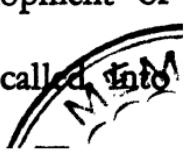
I do not wish here to countenance the misunderstanding that philosophic science is able to answer all questions of politics. It has never raised such meaningless claims. What it has achieved is this: to have indicated the right lines of political development, to have established the principles of the politics of the Constitution, of the politics of economics and of the politics of culture. What is yet outstanding is the alliance with Sociology and the inspiring of applied

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political science with the theories of philosophic politics.

But just in view of this necessity the attempt to educate political leaders gains an even deeper significance.

The scientific elucidation of political problems has been retarded not only by the vagaries to which philosophic speculation itself is prone. Powerful interests have influenced and disturbed the course of unbiased investigation. The investigation of truth—above all, of such practical truth as lays down the rules for men's actions—makes the highest demands upon the personal independence of the individual. One who cannot face being misunderstood, who has not the courage to hold fast, even when the results of investigation are disagreeable, who has not the patience to free his language from obscurity and ambiguity, may indeed accumulate knowledge, and dazzle the crowd with his learning, but he cannot help the cause of science. Only when we understand that science, above all practical science, demands men with inflexibly pure will and strong nerves, only when we decide not only to instruct but to educate the future investigator, shall we dare to hope for a happier and more rapid development of political sciences.

Should even a Platonic Academy, called 

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being to-day, yet be obliged to postpone its real aim—the education of future leaders—in order that it might, first of all, train only young men of promise to be investigators in the field of political science, and so to establish at least the theoretical foundation—if that were the case, the plan of education would be the same as if its work were the education of politicians. The training of character would stand first, and in that lies the difference between this academy and the institutions which already exist for the training of politicians, whether they be high schools, party schools, or workers' colleges.

In fact, there are political schools enough. But what is the avenue to them? Money, time and the art of words. Is the question ever asked, whether the school is not merely wasting its resources on place-hunters, windbags and satellites? Where is character seriously considered?

We do not wish at this point to evade the suggestion that the very things we lack are tested methods for the education of character, and, above all, men who have themselves passed through such schools for the training of the will. But that is no reason for despair. We place our hope upon those who at least are striving for sincerity, who are willing to forgo personal advantage for the realisation of their ideal of Justice, and who in

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close fellowship with others of like mind are willing to continue their own education.

How education for the vocation of leaders should be organised and carried out in detail I have often enough explained by word and pen. I will not now enter further into this, but rather use what time I have in discussing some objections that are frequently urged against me.

(1) It is admitted, with Goethe, that it is necessary "to manage and to keep in bounds a mixed and sometimes crazy world." But we cannot profess to believe that the methods of education are sufficient to supply the rulers who are fitted to cope with such tasks.

The work of statecraft, so it is said, has actually been mastered only by great outstanding personalities, who by the force of their endowment have controlled circumstances and set the course of history upon the path of progress. In the great crises of world history humanity has always found its saviour. The great time gives us the great man. In this plan of a Leaders' Academy is not rationalism at its evil work if its founders imagine that they can replace the miracle of genius by the skill of the schoolmaster? The great leaders of humanity have gifts which no education imparts: the passionate feeling, the sense of what is attain-

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able, the eye for men, the power of language. Without wishing to deny the insufficiency of the existing party schools, the high schools for politics and the workers' colleges, we suggest that you should consider whether possibly a good reason for these institutions confining themselves to teaching and technical instruction is not to be found in respect for the political genius, whom you should not presume to replace by means of education.

To this I reply : The Politics of Reason does not pretend to rear political genius. It disputes, simply on the ground of experience, that the great time produces the great man. It protests against leaving it solely to the political genius to lead history onwards. I warn you against a theory according to which our very *respect* for genius might *demand* that we should stamp the times in which political genius is wanting as times of stagnation or even of decline. Such theories betray us to fatalism, with all its degrading results. I ask the Democrats amongst us whether their motto, "Free paths for the fit," is compatible with such a theory.

But I warn you also against regarding the achievements of genius as simply inconceivable miracles. The original capacities of the genius are often no greater than those of the men of

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so-called political ability. The advantage of the genius over these is due, above all, to his more unremitting industry and the power of his will. I remind you of the words of Frederick the Great, speaking from his experience: "I am absolutely convinced that one can make of oneself what one *wills*." Instead of leaving the young aspirant to battle against malice and folly, ought we not to give him an opportunity for free development?

There is no political genius who was not at one time a learner—that is, who has not received formative impressions from his environment. How Marx is saturated with the spirit of Hegel and Bismarck with that of Junkerdom! Does anyone believe that we owe it to the political genius that his teacher should be appointed by *chance*? Certainly there will be men of genius who avoid the discipline of systematic education and trust themselves to chance rather than to rule, but then their *careers* will become a matter of chance, and also the aim which they pursue.

To us is allotted the task of realising *Justice*. We can spare ourselves every other high achievement. Every thoughtful man, therefore, for whom life is more than a mere film-drama has his appointed task in making smooth the way so that the best *available* powers are not wasted.

(2) Another misgiving is directed against bring-

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ing up men from early years in the idea of their future vocation as leaders. What can be expected from such a “prince-royal” education? Do we not destroy the flower of innocence, if at times when we can speak of deeds, even much less than of understanding, the seal of “being called to great things” is impressed upon every part of the training? Is not the spirit of place-hunting, of pride and of precociousness already present in the schools for promising children and in many of the experimental schools?

I think these considerations are quite justified. But there are safeguards against these threatening dangers. First, the Academy which we have planned offers no prospect of leading positions in public life. It is, for the present, simply a school with especially exacting demands upon the will. Even in choosing pupils we shall prefer simple straightforward natures to those that are precocious and talkative—in fact, the traits of character are clearly seen even in children. For us the principle holds good: The gods have put sweat before success. Self-importance and conceit flourish ill in such an atmosphere. Even within the school there is no talk of the expectation of leading positions. During the time of training it deals with all those who are strong enough to fulfil certain minimum demands of rigid discipline.

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Out of these there will gradually emerge those who, thanks to their ethical, intellectual and physical powers, show themselves more able than the rest. By their capacity they will rise to be leaders of their comrades. And so the range of their duties will grow more than that of their rights. If, nevertheless, they are led astray by their promotion and show signs of place-hunting or vanity, the teacher must step in with firm hand and cancel the too early advance. One who does not bear such a reverse is not fit to be a leader.

(3) Yet another hesitation. The question is asked, How is the rise to political leadership to come about after the training is ended? How is the ultimate political success to be attained? Unfortunately my time does not allow me to discuss this question in detail, but I would, however, devote to it a few words.

I will not attempt to mislead the questioner by saying that those trained in the schools for leaders are no worse off than others, who must also first climb the ladder to power, and who succeed through favourable circumstances or clever calculation—indeed, the chances of the pupils of the Academy are fewer. Injustice confronts them as a powerfully organised enemy. It has at its disposal well-tried methods, of which the lover of Justice

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cannot avail himself. And then there is the great company of those who are not open enemies, but yet are not active friends. I mean the host of the undecided, the so-called non-political, who exhaust their energy in discussions in which they show themselves both undaunted and tireless. All the greater is the influence they exert—an influence which Jakob Burckhardt, a good judge of history, severely criticises in the words: "But if the great man appeared, and did not perish at the very beginning of his career, it is a question whether they would not talk him to death."

Unusual efforts are therefore necessary. Everything will depend upon giving the leader proper support in the conflict. It is vain to trust to adherents who may be won by his success. They will fall away at the first failure. No; *before* the leader begins the conflict he must have followers upon whom he may absolutely rely.

The gathering of these followers must go hand in hand with the training of the leaders. The foundation of a bond of faith between leader and followers must be laid in their fellowship in education. And so one of the most important tasks of the Academy for Leaders lies in the training of followers by the creation of such a fellowship. We might almost despair in this task if we consider what has been done by those who in the last

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decade set themselves up to be national leaders. With a dismal thoroughness they have destroyed all confidence in the nation, and especially all confidence in leaders and leadership. More deeply than ever we realise to-day the bitter truth of the words from Nietzsche's *Zarathustra*. "There is no harder misfortune in all the fate of men than when the powerful ones of the earth are not also the foremost men ; then everything becomes false and warped and monstrous."

That is the situation in which we are to-day. We must begin at the very beginning, and first of all train leaders who *deserve* confidence, and followers who gladly, and ready for sacrifice, will be guided by their leaders. The bond of faith created in the Academy must be confirmed by common political work. Only when the leader succeeds in inspiring such a following with his will is there any sense in venturing upon the conflict. Without it, the work of the Leader of Reason is condemned to that hopeless struggle against an overwhelming enemy of which the history of frustrated reformations affords so many tragic examples.

A few days ago a friend sent me the *History of Oratory*, by Damaschke. On one of the first pages Damaschke speaks of the orator's power of carrying away and moving the minds of men, and then continues : "A firm standard of Justice and

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Injustice, of good and evil, must be felt to be a restraint in the exercise of such skill."

I, too, am conscious of such restraint. But I know how we may avoid this dilemma. Let us free the friends of Justice from having to compete in *eloquence* by helping them to prove by *deeds* that the Politics of Reason leads us towards a brighter future. Then shall we also be helping ourselves to regain faith in humanity; faith in the truth of the word that it is possible, by the simple moral law, to raise humanity to a higher level—a faith without which, indeed, the human race must be in our eyes an object of aversion and profoundest contempt.

IV

ETHICAL REALISM

**A Lecture delivered to the Students of Basle
on March 7, 1921**

IV

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“THE time is out of joint !” cries Hamlet, shamed and disgusted by the corruption of the Danish Court. Surely he would use no other word in view of the condition of Europe at the present day. None but a prophet could foretell whether this chaos will end in utter ruin or in a fresh advance. Nothing is gained by merely looking at the situation, whether it be with sorrow or with hope. Healthy and noble natures strive to shake off the mood of mere contemplation and rally to the side of men who are setting themselves to prevent any further decline of the European peoples.

The young man, however, who is eager to take his place beside those engaged in this struggle, but who does not wish to decide without due thought, is sorely perplexed.

He sees, on the one hand, the defenders of the old order, with what amazing energy they uphold the power which safeguards their aims. Supported by organisations which have stood the test, and to whose improvement they devote their

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ingenuity and courage ; tempered in a hard school of daily service ; spurred on by competing organisations, they have entered into an arena in which they develop to the utmost their industry, their business capacity and their organising skill. In the sphere of foreign politics, of political economy and of culture, we mark the growing power of those who advocate traditional ideals. We see it in the victorious advance of imperialism, in the increasing trustification and cartelising of economic associations, and in the constant consolidation and growth of the influence of clericalism.

The youth who wishes, as he grows up, to be master of his life stands amazed at this mass of organised power, at these men of action who have no room for sentiment in their work.

But his admiration for all this is not undivided. After all, he cherishes, as Keynes has said, "Another view, or at least another hope, as to the nature of civilised man."

He sees that there are men who differ from those guardians of the old order, and with whom he feels himself at one in a common faith.

These men have not yet risen to power, but they are shaping the plan of such a redistribution of it as will ensure more than the mere regulation of life. They are not pleaders for the traditional powers, but for those that still bide their time.

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The young man who listens to them is captivated by the charm of their wide range of thought and their freedom from tradition. Fidelity and courage call him to follow these political, social or religious reformers.

He who to-day has yet to choose his standpoint in life must decide between these two conflicting tendencies. There are times when the existence of the individual, and of national communities, seems assured by the protection of powerful organisations which hold undisputed sway in public life. Then the struggle between the forces of conservatism and of revolution goes on in comparatively calm ways. The solid ground, upon which one is standing, endures the shocks of opposition as the earth endures the storms of spring ; and the progressive leaders, on their part, believe that they have so much freedom that they may trust their cause to the steady course of development.

The forms of peaceful adjustment between the forces of conservatism and of revolution have been shattered by the war. The nations are thrown back into a state in which anxiety for the bare means of life overpowers all other interests. Whilst everything urges on to an imperative work of rescue, the rift between the defenders of the old order and the new becomes ever deeper, and

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frustrates the hope of any constructive work at all being done. The followers of the new order bring the charge of brutality against the strategists and organisers of the old. These reply with the reproach of irresponsibility in regard to the fate of peoples, who can no longer endure the risk of experiment. The non-party man is concerned with only the one question: Upon which side do we find deliverance from certain ruin?

It is not for me to decide this question to-day, for if that is to be done, with fitting seriousness and sense of responsibility, it would take more time than has been allotted to me. I propose to set myself a more modest task. I wish to direct your attention to a far simpler, but also, on that account, a more general question, one which does not attempt to decide the value of the aims which, at the moment, offer themselves for choice. A preliminary question has to be dealt with, one which has to be solved if we would arrive at a steady course of action. It is a question which we can never avoid when it is necessary for us to decide upon any definite aim.

I refer to the question as to how far the ideal which we are to choose is compatible with life, and, more precisely, as to the conditions of its applicability to life.

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This question, as we have seen, presses upon the youth of to-day more hardly than ever. Who gives him an answer to this question? Does life? He himself is standing only upon life's threshold. Is he to trust to the judgment of those who have life behind them? Those fathers who look calmly upon the storm and stress of their sons, thinking that they will soon be cured of that by life's sober realities? Or those recluses who in the dim light of their cells guard the vial which holds the precious magic potion of their youthful ideals? To both of these he will give the answer of Nietzsche: "I wish to disclose a more robust ideal." He will turn to those who contend for their ideal in life.

But is life—that is, experience—at all able to give the answer? If we ask, What is the value of experience for us? our hope of finding a satisfactory answer vanishes, for there appears to be something vague about experience. By experience certain *facts* can be established. We have experienced that Tolstoi proclaimed the doctrine of non-resistance, that he followed that doctrine, and that thousands have gone on pilgrimage to him as to a saint. We have further experienced the World War, and we have seen how the force of arms has triumphed over those preachers of patient love. Does the comparison of these two

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facts suffice to decide that the doctrine of non-resistance belongs to the hopes which are never to be quenched, but also never to be realised?

Or take another series of facts: When Cecil Rhodes was still a member of Oxford University he laid his big hand one day on the map of Africa and said: "This is my dream: all English." The dream draws near its fulfilment. But is his other dream being fulfilled with it—the dream which he expressed in his will of 1877: the founding of an empire great enough to put an end to all war?

Experience shows us the victory of the power which is for the time being the strongest. But is the victor of to-day still the victor of to-morrow? And what does even a final victory, or a final defeat, decide? Does the destruction of Carthage really prove that Carthage deserved to perish?

And how could experience help us in face of new movements just coming into history?

If experience does not answer our question as to the realisation of the ideal in life, then we can only question the ideal itself, and seek to learn from it what it means for us to make the realisation of an ideal our task.

We at once notice that we are here dealing with a question of so general a character that we must

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seek its answer in that which belongs to every ideal as such. For the question is not concerning a particular ideal. If it can be answered at all, the answer must be independent of the particular content of this or that ideal.

We are therefore in the happy position of being able to start from premises so slight that it is not necessary to decide the question of determining the content of the ideal.

In treating the content of the ideal in this abstract way, we pass into a region in which there may at first seem little prospect of our reaching sufficiently fruitful results. I am conscious, too, that not everyone is accustomed to breathe freely in the air of such altitudes. But you will understand that to me it is an attraction to leave for once the lowlands from which I come to you entirely beneath me, and to climb those heights in your company. I hope, in so doing, to convince you that in that atmosphere—rare indeed, but not the less clear and pure—we shall discover fields whose unexpected fruitfulness will richly repay us the pains of such high adventure.

This attempt will at the same time illustrate the profound connection and the wonderful harmony which obtain between the highest and purest abstractions of theory and the most pressing and practically significant necessities of life. This

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connection and harmony have hitherto been so entirely misunderstood only because science in this region, where we are most dependent upon its help, still remains so little developed. And this, again, is due to the fact that the treatment of the doctrine of ideals has hitherto been, for the most part, in the hands of those who were not appointed to it because of their familiarity with scientific methods, but were rather led into it by æsthetic inclination and the popularity of the subject. The result of this was that, for the sake of hastily snatching at more beautiful and dazzling results, the exploration of the ground from which these fruits were to be gathered was neglected. But such exploration was needed in order to learn whether the ground would bear the foot of the seeker, and whether they might not be merely marsh plants, whose bright flowers were tempting us upon uncertain bog-land.

Thus, as I said, I leave it wholly undecided what content the ideal possesses, and confine myself to the single hypothesis : *that* there is an ideal.

Allow me to pause a moment upon that proposition, in order to prevent any confusion arising as to its meaning. It says nothing beyond what is admitted by each one who claims any meaning for his conduct—a meaning which goes beyond

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the mere satisfaction of the impulses which happen to dominate him.

In so far as we give to certain actions a value beyond others, and enter at all into a discussion as to why one way of acting should be preferred to another, we are assuming a standard which I indicate in the most general way as an *ideal*.

An ideal stands for a demand, which defines what ought to happen, independently of whether it actually does happen. It defines an aim, to approach which is worthy, to depart from which is unworthy. *What* this aim is, I leave here entirely aside. Only this much do I maintain, that whatsoever its content may be, it must be determined independently of any subjective preference. For here we are not speaking of the preference which we give to an effort in virtue of the merely accidental preponderance of our inclination, otherwise we could only speak of the fact that we do *actually* prefer the one to the other, but not of the fact that it *deserves* the preference.

Take a simple illustration: In our common traffic in the street we reject the idea that each man should make his way as he pleases, that the strong should run down the weak. We think, on the contrary, that there should be a rule of the road, which saves us from having to trust only to our strength of limb in order to get along.

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Such a rule is nothing but an ideal as we have defined the word.

Or take another illustration : A Lucullus, who in the education of his children attaches importance only to their obtaining the same capacity of enjoyment which makes life of worth to him, confirms the principle which we have just advanced of the existence of an ideal.

Now so much is clear, that a rule, by whose help we wish to master the facts, only fulfils its purpose when we do not leave its application to mere chance. That is to say, everything depends upon our personal conduct. We master facts only by subordinating them to the ideal by our will. If, then, man is to become master of the facts, he must, *further*, not allow himself to be moved by the fact of a chance inclination, a passion, a custom or habit, but he must master these as well. Ideal conduct thus presupposes circumspection, the sway of reflection over the blind force of sense and of mere habit ; and this, not only where it is a question of choosing the means, but also in the choice of the end itself. Only when a man has placed, not only the realisation of his end, but also its very choice, beyond the reach of chance, do I call his effort an *ideal* effort and he himself an *Idealist*.

Here, again, we will pause a moment and con-

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sider how the idea which is commonly held of an Idealist is related to this.

We usually oppose the Idealist to the Realist. What marks out the Idealist is undoubtedly what is called—to use a good German phrase—“purity of soul.” Whilst we call the man a Realist who is intent only upon the success of his action, without any concern as to the purity of his soul, we attribute Idealism to the man who is intent upon the purity of his soul and has no concern about the success of his action.

If, now, in order to make this contrast clear, we ask, In what, then, does the essence of *purity* of soul consist? it is evident that this refers to what is called the man's mind (*Gesinnung*). And if we ask further, What, then, is understood by “mind”? it will be agreed that the mind shows itself in the motive which determines the will. And nothing but the representation of an aim can be the motive of the will. But, finally, what is the distinctive element in the representation of an aim which gives to it the character of purity? Evidently we speak of a pure motive, where the representation of the aim in question is the representation of an ideal aim—in short, of an ideal.

If we sum up this discussion we come to the definition: “Purity of soul” is nothing else than

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determination of the will by the representation of an ideal.

Now if the Idealist, according to the usual idea, is intent upon the purity of his soul, his ideal is evidently no other than that of the purity of his soul. But since purity of soul, in its turn, is nothing else than the determination of the will by the representation of an ideal, this so-called Idealist is lacking in just that representation of an ideal which might determine his will. For it is impossible that this ideal should merely be the ideal of purity over again, since surely the representation of *another* ideal must precede, which in its turn determines the will, and only thereby confers upon it its purity.

Where such an ideal, determined elsewhere, is wanting, there is wanting the very thing which alone makes idealism possible. The alleged Idealist is therefore the victim of a self-deception. The more he is absorbed in care for the purity of his soul, the more surely will he forfeit that purity. He deserves to be called an *Enthusiast*. And since he is not even an enthusiast for an actual ideal, but only for the assumed purity of his soul, he is an Enthusiast only for an Enthusiasm.

If now we remember that we said that a Realist was one who is intent upon the success of his action, without any concern for the purity of his

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soul, then there follows the proposition, seemingly a paradox, but irrefutably valid, that if there is to be such a thing at all as an Idealist as distinct from a mere Enthusiast, the Idealist not only *can* be but *must* be a Realist. And it is, in fact, this necessary realism which distinguishes the Idealist from the mere Enthusiast.

Of course, I do not maintain by this that, conversely, every Realist is also an Idealist, for this depends upon the nature of the success about which the Realist is concerned. The Realist is an Idealist when, and only when, the success, the representation of which determines his will, is success with regard to an ideal; for, in fact, it is only interest in the successful attainment of the ideal which constitutes purity of mind.

One might be tempted to ask whether there actually are men who represent that type of the Enthusiast. But, alas! this type thrusts itself upon us—and, indeed, just amongst the so-called educated youth—in such a way that the serious observer fears for their future.

The eager idealism, which in its reaction against a cramping system of education once seemed to give the young a hopeful impulse, has long since declined to an empty, introverted and therefore unyouthful cult of its own beauty of soul. The

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real beauty of the soul of youth lies in its undefined urge towards the ideal and in the innocence of its still undeveloped powers. To make this an object of self-observation, and indeed to elevate it to a holy shrine, carefully to be guarded, means not only to forfeit childlike innocence, but becomes a direct crime against those powers which are pressing towards the light, and which can only be developed by *deeds*. There is a self-admiration which reveals in the admiration of its own purity, and leads to arrogance against those for whom active life leaves no time for the culture of their own purity of soul. This spirit injures every healthy and vigorous feeling, and destroys the hope of ever finding these enthusiasts ready for active work on behalf of the ideal.

Their cult of purity is, at bottom, flight from the ideal, which lays upon them struggles and pains which they have no heart to face.

This reasoning may be questioned on the ground that its starting-point is doubtful, since the purity which marks out the Idealist does not depend so much on the determination of the will as rather on the representation which he forms of the ideal.

The point here in question is as to how the ideal is represented. It is conceived as raised so far above all human effort that any exertion of the

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human will to secure its realisation seems presumptuous. This way of thinking springs from a particular view of the course of things in the world. If the cultivation of the mind has not made sufficient progress amongst a people, then the religious, ethical and scientific views of the people are in confusion, and it is no wonder that those who form any view at all of the course of things in the world have one which is wrong.

Amongst those who do form such a view, those who have strong religious feeling, but not much intelligence, support their faith in *the Good* in the world by a belief in its necessary realisation in Nature. They believe it to be due to the sublimity of the ideal that no doubt should be admitted as to its realisation in Nature ; they assume therefore an *infinite power* of the Good in Nature which, without our co-operation, will win the victory for itself. They dispel the anxieties of distressed souls, in the presence of the success of evil, by the comforting assurance “To those who love God *all* things must work together for good.” When the burden of evil, however, becomes too great, and optimistic explanations of its doings no longer suffice, then they make a selection of the things that are useful and flee with them into solitude. They boycott the world, as Ku-Hung-

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Ming says, and leave it to those for whom all things serve, certainly not for the best, but for the satisfaction of their egoistic impulses.

On the other hand, those who have little religious feeling, but are sufficiently intelligent, under such conditions in the world, take up the opposite and pessimistic view. They exchange belief in the necessary victory of the Good in the world for a belief in its necessary defeat. Their maxim is, "All is vanity." It does not lead them to fold their arms and to boycott the world, but yet in a prudent way to boycott all that commends itself solely by its ideal worth and offers no stimulus of gratification.

In each case the result is the same. The Optimist does not give his support to the Good because, in his view, it does not need his help, and the Pessimist does not do so because it would mean "love's labour lost." And so they each do their part in making the world worse every day!

With equal indignation the Optimist and the Pessimist deny responsibility for this result. They both, indeed, flatly refuse to allow that the will has any determining influence upon the course of events. For freedom they both substitute a blind Fate, according to which the ideal must either realise itself with the necessity of a natural law or must be defeated with the like necessity. Thus each of

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them cuts away the ground from any effort on man's part to strike a blow for the victory of the Good. Each of them, the Optimist as well as the Pessimist, mistakes the practical significance of the ideal. For practical belief in the ideal, which has nothing to do with what does happen, but with what ought to happen, they substitute a speculative belief in reality, the belief of Fatalism, according to which all that takes place in Nature must move either in the direction of the ideal or in the direction opposite to it. By this belief concerning Nature, however, the Optimist and the Pessimist come into conflict not only with idealism—a reproach which the Optimist least of all expects—but this belief slaps every sort of realism just as sharply in the face—a fact which will rather interest the Pessimist.

The Realist, who regards as impossible only *the* result for which adequate powers are not staked, forms his view of the course of things in Nature not according to any conviction of faith, but solely upon the basis of the experimental investigation of facts. The Pessimist, on the contrary, who prides himself on his more sober sense of reality, is in truth just as deluded a visionary as the Optimist. In opposition to the Realist, who measures his hope of success by the powers which are generally available, the Pessimist dogmatically excludes the moral

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power of man, and paints a picture of Nature in which only non-ethical powers are taken into account. There can therefore be just as little delusion as to the fatalism of the Optimist, when he claims to be an Idealist, as there can be mistake as to the visionary in the Pessimist when he sets up for a Realist.

The false-idealism of the Optimist and the false-realism of the Pessimist alike rest upon a *speculative superstition*.

But (and this is for us the thing really worthy of notice) this speculative superstition is nothing but the reverse side of a *practical unbelief*—practical unbelief, that is, in so far as it is supposed that idealism is dependent upon the presupposition of the victory of the Good in Nature independently of any human co-operation. Confidence in the assumed power of the Good to realise itself is thus purchased at the price of unbelief in the power of the personal moral will of man—the price of the loss of moral self-confidence.

But now, between the superstition of the Optimist and that of the Pessimist, we notice this difference. The speculative faith of the Optimist has this characteristic: not only is it unable to hold its ground against a realistic view of things, but it also condemns *itself* as *untruth*; it demonstrates its own falsity. For what, according to its con-

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ception, is presented by means of an ideal, the realisation of which can only be assured through action, needs only to be held at the same time to be unattainable in order to become thereby actually unattainable. For what is actually necessary, without our co-operation, does not need our co-operation in order to be realised, so we shall do nothing toward its realisation. But surely no ideal is realised by inaction. The Optimist has thus to blame himself for the fact that reality gives him the lie. He must therefore be disillusioned when the failure, of which he himself is the cause, comes about. He may overcome this by fair words for the future, but it presses hard upon the less steadfast, until finally he too can no longer avoid falling away to the camp of the Pessimists.

The characteristic of the unbelief of the Pessimist, on the contrary, is this : that it brings about *its own truth*. For the ideal, which is attainable only by action, needs only to be held to be *un*-attainable in order actually to become unattainable. Pessimism has therefore always an advantage over Optimism, because idle standing aloof allows belief in the certainty of failure to triumph over belief in the certainty of success.

Under these circumstances the Pessimist has always more ground for giving himself airs, as a

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man of worldly wisdom and as a prophet, than the Optimist. But this worldly wisdom does not demand much acuteness, and for such prophesying one does not need the gift of second sight; on the contrary, it consists only in prophesying the occurrence of something which is brought about by one's own conduct.

We need not seek far to find an example of this. The question, so frequently bandied about, as to the guilt of the war is still awaiting its final answer. In the light of the facts which have just been established, does not a new answer present itself? I venture the assertion: The unhappy catastrophe was not brought about by the alliance of any military powers whatsoever. We have to thank another alliance for this world war. For it we have to thank the *entente cordiale* which has for so long existed between the Optimists and the Pessimists of so-called educated European Society. Certainly no account has ever been taken in political circles of the disastrous power which here had its rise.

It is a well-known fact that for decades educated European Society was discussing with lively interest the problem of the threatening world war. There were two parties in this discussion. Men were divided on the question, Will the world war come? Whilst some held the conviction that

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under the conditions of present-day civilisation and of world economics a world war was absolutely impossible—a conviction which had its adherents even in the ranks of Prussian officers—others with equal confidence maintained that the world war was inevitable and its outbreak only a question of time—an opinion which found zealous apostles even amongst the clergy.

The activities of the handful of warmongers would never have set in motion the millions of armed men if educated European Society, as a whole, paralysed by its fatalism, had not stood aside. For that Society the problem of the war was a matter for *discussion*. It was concerned simply with the question whether the Optimist or the Pessimist would prove right after all. In its blindness it did not observe that, simply as the result of this way of putting the question, the advantage must fall more and more to the Pessimists—in fact, whilst it was carrying on this discussion, which was of interest to itself alone, it gave a free hand to that handful of warmongers, and these were able to dictate to humanity the way in which it must act.

It is not difficult to explain how it was that educated European Society could lapse into such enervating fatalism. It owes this demoralisation to the spirit which for a long time has dominated

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its education—to the spirit which, under the name of Idealism, has befooled the youth of Europe, deceiving it by an ideal of education which at best might form enthusiasts but no moral personalities. The guilt of the war, paradoxical as it may sound, lies at the door of the “Idealism” of the European gymnasiums and universities.

The genuine Idealist knows that he is free from any visionary ideas as to the realisation of ideal efforts. He does not refuse to enlist men's inclinations in the service of his aims, since for him the end is not in the toil of the conflict, but only in the triumph of the Good. Nor, on the other hand, does he rely on the care of mysterious powers which will awaken the higher life in our midst. He does not base his hopes upon a mystical speculation as to the course of things, but solely upon the power which we exert for ideal aims. The Idealist is neither a dreamer nor a doubter, but he looks at the world as it is, with the eyes of the Realist, and from such realism his energy and his courage spring. As a Realist he knows that in Nature, in and for itself, it is a matter of accident whether what happens is the thing that ought to happen. But he knows also that it *can* happen, if only the Good brings to bear the strongest force. Realism

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teaches the Idealist to know the means which are necessary for the attainment of his aim. It teaches him that pious wishes have no power to move things in the world of space, and that we must get our hands busy if we want to make this world better. It teaches the Idealist to refuse to acknowledge the idealism of those who make the ideal an object of enthusiasm instead of something for which to work. If the Idealist puts to the test the theories of wisdom and beauty which offer themselves to him, then the Realist joins with him. Whenever a prophet puts his treasure into the balance, then the Realist inquires as to the powers which the prophet brings to the services of his aim. If he gets no clear answer to his question, then his sentence runs, "Weighed and found wanting."

It may be that many amongst you may be concerned as to whether Idealism, so understood, does not bring us into a doubtful neighbourhood, that of an *Opportunism* which puts on a cloak of Idealism in order the more freely to allow regard for circumstances to govern the choice of its aims.

What weight is there in this suspicion?

We will admit this much, that the Idealist who is successful in his struggle for the ideal runs the risk of being misled by his success. His tempta-

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tion is that, instead of wishing for the end which is recognised as preferable, the highest possible measure of success under the circumstances, he allows the highest measure of success which is possible under the circumstances to decide the choice of his aim, and so changes his aims just according as circumstances may favour. We are suspicious about the Idealism of those who, as Socialists, discovered in August 1914 that they were patriots, and of those who, as Nationalists, in November 1918 discovered that they were pacifist at heart. The danger of being misled is thus to be admitted.

But what does the existence of such a danger mean for the Idealist in his struggle? Merely this: that here, as everywhere, where any risk is run, traitors and deserters are to be found. If a man, fearing to be carried away by his own passions in the affairs of this world, gives up the struggle at the outset, he has already become a Pessimist and rashly excluded himself from the ranks of the Idealists.

So far as the mere suspicion and semblance of Opportunism to which one is exposed as an Ethical Realist, we would the more readily admit the justice of the charge if, because of the evil semblance, the ideal itself were abandoned. To choose the means so as to achieve the end is an entirely different

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thing from choosing the end so as to accommodate it to the means.

The Realist, as I conceive him, has nothing in common with the folk who go about hawking the wise counsel that one should only strive after what is attainable.

We must be clear that this is very doubtful wisdom, so as not to be misled by the sophistry which is every day committed in its name. Surely we should only strive for what is attainable, but in so doing should not forget that what we attain depends in its turn upon what we *strive for*. We should ask whether, by not striving for something, we do not thereby *make* this unattainable beforehand. So the only true thing to say is this, that we should strive for what is *attainable by effort*, not for what is to be had without effort. Each man, however, can give himself this advice. For what is already attainable without any effort no one would wish to attain by striving, and to wish to strive for what cannot be attained by any effort would most certainly never occur to anyone.

A conflict can only arise as to whether, in a particular case, something not otherwise attainable may be gained by *effort*. But this is a question of facts, and not at all a question of duty. Its answer can only be gained from experience by investigation of the circumstances, and cannot be

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anticipated by an Optimism or a Pessimism based upon superstition.

The same mistake appears, in another form, in the conflict which is renewed day by day as to the meaning of *fidelity to principle*.

Here we touch a problem which at the moment strongly agitates those who form the left wing of European politics. This left wing, because of its attitude of opposition to the ruling powers, starts with an inclination to more radical views. Through Marxism it has come into possession of a theoretical system which has come to be the foundation and corner-stone of almost all the party programmes of Socialism. But now, when we find a Marxist introducing the theory of his master into the world of facts, and transforming a vast empire into a Socialist State, we observe, curiously, that the man who maintains that Bolshevism arose in the year 1903, on the firm basis of Marxian theory, is more and more loosening this foundation by one compromise after another. It is not the relation of Bolshevism to Marxism which engages us here, but the question which demands a fundamental solution : Is the fact of compromise sufficient to justify the imputation of disloyalty to the ideal ?

Lenin himself says : " Absolutely to refuse com-

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promise is a childishness which can hardly be taken very seriously." These words of Lenin are a confession, but they do not afford us any reason.

It will be admitted that the principle of refusing any compromise, because in some respects it runs counter to the ideal, cannot be maintained in actual life. Such a principle would demand the complete abandonment of the ideal, where circumstances did not admit of its immediate realisation, since the approximation to the ideal which is possible under the circumstances would not satisfy. Goethe says : " The man of action is always unscrupulous ; nobody has a conscience except the onlooker." In this he evidently wishes to express that the man of action has to deal with compromises, and therefore must give up the simple carrying out of his ideals. Only by inaction can compromise be avoided, and so inward purity be preserved.

But is it really the case that the man of action is necessarily without principle because he has to deal with compromise ? Let us at least consider that the supposed renunciation of action, in so far as it is an omission, is itself a sort of action. It is an action of such a kind that through it the ideal, which depends upon action for its realisation, almost certainly remains unattainably remote. The man who cannot arouse himself to action because of his scruples about the compromises which, as

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things stand, are necessary for action, must answer for it to his own conscience that even the possible advance, which could be made by means of compromise, is unrealised.

If by compromise is meant the abandonment of the approximation to the ideal, which is *possible* under the prevailing circumstances, *in favour of another aim*, then such compromise is certainly to be rejected, for it would be tantamount to surrender before the last reserves had been brought up.

But the expression has also another meaning. We speak of compromise in the case where the man of action adopts means which involve giving up the strict realisation of the ideal, and enters upon a path which may even take him away from his ideal. In this sense compromise need not be objectionable. In order to be clear upon this point, let us put the question : What happens if the compromise is rejected ? If we wish to insist upon the realisation of the ideal without any compromise, then we must lay down our arms and let things take their course. We should have to be optimistic visionaries to believe that the adverse circumstances, which bar the straight way to the aim, would vanish of themselves. But if we do not cherish this visionary faith, and yet persist in our renunciation, what are we to think

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of our purity? We leave the field free to those who are less sensitive in the choice of their aims and in the choice of their means. This assumed conscientiousness is, in fact, the greatest lack of conscience in the face of the ideal, for it is this inactivity which prevents reality from advancing ever nearer to the ideal. But that question is not discussed. Whilst the visionary soars above the world of facts, the man who refuses to compromise transfers the inflexibility of his aim to the means by which he thinks to attain it. He is fettered by a preconceived theory, and ignores the variety of the circumstances by which a path which in one case is quite practicable is in another case closed.

So it remains that readiness to make compromises is a test of the sincerity of a man's Idealism, for such readiness is the condition of the realisation of the ideal aims which one would ostensibly realise. Nothing can form the purpose of our action if we refuse to make the condition of its realisation also our purpose. It would be to will something without willing the conditions of the possibility of its realisation. It would be in truth to will the impossible. But to will the impossible is itself impossible. He who pretends to anything of that kind, does in reality will absolutely nothing, but revels only in pious wishes.

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And so the man who does not wish to be a doctrinaire, espousing a mere pseudo-Idealism, will, in each particular case, consider the means and choose the action which, on the whole, allows him the nearest approach to the ultimate aim of the ideal. He will take upon himself the semblance of Opportunism ; for even under this appearance he will render, *on the whole*, a better service to his ideal than if, from fear of seeming false, he actually betrays it.

Let us test this result by an example. The Peace has given us the "League of Nations." It is a fearful instrument of the will of the conquerors concealing itself but ill under this noble name. The man who recoils from it will be sure of the understanding of every lover of justice. But if, because of the injustice and brutality which characterises this League of Nations, he refuses to co-operate with it, he does not serve the cause of Justice. He simply hands over to the powers of injustice the one living centre from which, according to human judgment at least, the spirit of mutual understanding may some day go forth among the nations.

I am conscious that this example, just as little as any other, will serve to teach those who have already fallen into the attitude of mind against

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which I am here giving warning. For it is just the element of danger in this attitude that the doctrinaire, in transferring the ideality of his aim to the means as well, permits no consideration of its suitability to determine the choice of means. So doing, he shuts his eyes to all the teachings of experience. For how are adverse facts to justify the surrender of what is demanded by the ideal itself? Therefore, though his failure may be ever so glaring, that will not disconcert the consistent doctrinaire; it will rather be for him a proof of his steadfastness. His false way of thinking forbids him to draw from the course of events the conclusion that his programme is out of harmony with reality. Spellbound by his theory, he interprets his failure to mean that he has not yet advanced far enough along the road which seems to him the best, and he takes it as a demand that he advance all the more unswervingly in this direction.

Examples of such obstinacy meet us in all camps, not least amongst the admirers of a so-called Real-politics. Those friends of "real guarantees," who undertake to ensure peace by the policy of armaments—a policy which every unprejudiced mind sees to be a growing menace to peace—do not allow ourselves, even by the outbreak of the most fearful of wars, to be turned aside from their faith in the goodness of their programme, but only

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draw the conclusion that the failure has been in the extent of preparation.

This dangerous misinterpretation of experience is, however, very natural in cases where the endeavour has actually been made to take the ideal as a guide.

The advocates of democracy always see, in this form of government, the best possible guarantee for the realisation of justice. The fact that conflicts of interest between democratic powers were determined by the lawless means of war; and still further, the sanctioning of the same law of the strong hand after the war by those of the victors who were the most advanced in democracy—these facts, which in the eyes of the unprejudiced observer attest the tragic bankruptcy of democracy, only drive those deluded men to seek relief from the evil in a still further extension of the democratic movement.

But when once unfavourable experiences do actually disconcert the doctrinaire, then he is inclined to let his doubt be silenced by seeming success. His narrowness of outlook encourages his opponent to make formal concessions which have not much more than the name in common with his original demands. The artifice may be ventured upon, not only because the doctrinaire will not stoop to the game of the diplomats, but

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because, if his own unbending tactics deny him success, he adopts the self-defence of the fanatic who believes what he wants to believe.

Who is there here who does not at once visualise the Knight of the Sorrowful Countenance whose name has become immortal only through the enormity of the disaster which his good faith, in the seriousness of his will to be arbitrator between the nations, has brought about, and through the still more fatal calamity of the destruction of faith in the humanity which has been so cruelly disappointed? How there stands out against that the figure of the "Tiger," who, thanks to his determination to pay any price for his end, has easily beaten his partner, who had at his disposal the twofold power of the world's trust and of the unbroken might of his arms, and has forced his stronger will upon humanity!

My endeavour to restore the reputation of the true Idealist by banishing the visionary and the doctrinaire from his fellowship compels me finally to proscribe also yet another of his associates, one lovable in himself, but not on that account less dangerous.

"Sometimes in the days of youth," says Fries (*Wissen, Glaube und Abndung*, S. 125), "this ideal life and its noble forms in religion or art appears

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to man in the full glory of its sublime character. But the close, noisy bustle of common life chokes, often all too soon, the scarcely kindled flame, destroys faith in this nobler life, or, at least, forces it out of the ordinary consciousness almost entirely back into the inner life, from which it but rarely again moves the soul."

The feeling of inspiration, awakened by a pure impulse, is by its very nature more receptive of ideals than any other. But the task of building up the moral order, which the ideal lays upon us, lies beyond its power.

An action which arises from feeling is, as such, no considered action. The man who is inspired, who acts not only with inspiration but from inspiration, acts without thought; for inspiration becomes for him the condition of following the ideal impulse. He has not withdrawn his acting in harmony with the ideal from chance. He allows it to depend upon a feeling, whether he follows the ideal or not. Such a man we call an *Enthusiast*. Enthusiasm as a feeling can promise no permanence. "Inspiration," says Goethe, "is not like herrings, which can be put in pickle and kept for years."

He who follows the ideal only under the impulse of inspiration will lose the energy of his will if the resistance with which he meets is strong enough to outlast his feeling. On the contrary, he who

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pursues the ideal with deliberation, although not without inspiration, will not be drawn away from his purpose, even though strong opposition may weaken the energy of his inspiration; for his purpose in no way depends upon his inspiration.

The disposition of the man who makes the ideality of his conduct independent of chance, and thus maintains his fidelity to the ideal unmoved by the favour or disfavour of fortune—the disposition of such a man is *Resignation*. Since he renounces from the outset what is impossible, and devotes his energies to making the ideal supreme, within the bounds of the possible, he gains that imperturbable calm of soul which springs from the consciousness of standing upon ground which cannot be shaken. Resignation should thus be the inmost disposition of the cultured man. It does not shut him out from the inspiration of success, but he does not depend upon it, and he readily resigns himself to what lies beyond the power of his will.

Fortune grants us a favour upon which we cannot depend. He who lets himself depend upon the chance of fortune makes himself a slave—at the best a happy slave—of destiny, so long as fortune smiles upon him.

Resignation alone guarantees steadfastness of

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will, and frees us from the dangers which arise when illusions are destroyed, because from the outset it enables us to forgo success. Only through resignation can we win that ethical self-confidence which success can never give.

It has been our purpose in this consideration to abstract from any definite *content* of an ideal, and to examine whether we do not reach sufficiently fruitful results, even when we set out from the bare *notion* of an ideal in general. These results have reference, as I stated at the beginning, only to a *preliminary question*, which always presents itself when we have to choose between particular ideals ; and which must therefore be answered before there can be any further meaning, in launching out upon the investigation as to what particular ideals are to be preferred. This preliminary question is that as to the conditions under which the ideal can be applied to actual life. *Experience* refuses to answer this question ; and just as little could we seek the answer in the *content* of the ideal, just because this content can have meaning and applicability for us only upon the ground of the answer to the question. Simply and solely by making clear the *notion* of the ideal could we expect to find our answer.

Let us compare our result with this ! Certainly

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no definite ideals are as yet indicated to us, but that is a matter of course from the very stating of the problem. The negative gain of discovering a sure criterion for the separation of all merely pseudo-Idealism is therefore not to be lightly assessed—and this, as we saw, even from a practical point of view. The criterion of pseudo-Idealism we found to be that it did not satisfy the claims of Realism. We found that this criterion held good in all cases, whether the assumed Idealist met us in the form of the visionary, the doctrinaire or the enthusiast.

How much may depend on the confusion and consequent misinterpretation to which the conception of the ideal, in and for itself, is exposed we were able to convince ourselves from the example of the war.

When we have recognised the real cause which brought about the European catastrophe, then, and only then, can we hope to find the way of escape from the miseries which it has brought about. I hope I have shown you that it was not the malice of the warmongers nor the military power of the alliances forged by them which was in truth the cause of all this misery, but that the deeper ground and the real cause of it is to be sought in the spiritual condition of educated European Society. It was, as I said, the secret alliance of the pseudo-Idealism

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of this Society, with its inevitable outgrowth of Pessimism, which—through the Fatalism which united them—was the cause of the catastrophe.

Idealism is to-day the hereditary tenure of the visionaries. Realism has become the undisputed privilege of the Egoists. These monopolies must be broken if European culture and civilisation is yet to have a future.

My hope lies in a new alliance. I plead for the holy alliance of Idealism with Realism.

If we are in earnest about our Idealism, we shall not rest until we find ways and means of realising our ideals.

In the words of Confucius: “He who does not ask, How can I *do* that? how *can* I do that? with him I can do nothing.”

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THE MORAL AND THE RELIGIOUS
VIEW OF THE WORLD

An Address given at the 26th Student Conference
at Aarau, March 13 to 15, 1922

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THE MORAL AND THE RELIGIOUS VIEW
OF THE WORLD

ROMAIN ROLLAND says a beautiful and simple thing about Jean Christophe : " After all, he was far too religious to think much about God." We cannot say that of our time. Our time thinks much about God, but it is not religious.

Behind us lies the sudden change from security and prosperity to insecurity and want. Men no longer see their way. They can no longer cover their expenses. Violent fluctuations of price have completely confused the value of material goods, and spiritual values have become altogether vague. What some reject wins for others an all the more exaggerated worth.

The majority stand perplexed at these fluctuations of moral currency. They follow the impulse of the moment, but for all that, they long for some security of mind, some firm foundation of conviction. They feel the need of learning how to judge and understand events and of relating their judgment harmoniously to an ordered world about them.

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Certainly there have been times in the past when the calamities of men have been as great as—nay, even greater than—to-day: times in which decades of wars and invasions or the adverse powers of Nature have defeated men. But they had that which our generation lacks to help them to see their way and begin afresh. Their thought and faith rested in a “closed” view of the world. This view might be naïve, superstitious, short-sighted and earth-bound, or visionary and mystical, now nearer to, now farther from the truth; but yet it formed the firm foundation of their existence, the ground upon which they could build again when the flood of events had passed over them.

Since the time of the Reformation this idea of a closed world has fallen into ruin. The cleavage of faith, brought about by Luther in the beginning, soon passed into a mere cleavage of the Churches, in which dogma opposed dogma. This gulf could be bridged over by means of edicts of toleration. But the gulf formed by the reformation of astronomy went deeper and was unbridgable. When Kepler subjected the orbits of the planets to the geometry of conic sections, and Newton explained the movements of the heavenly bodies by the application of the law of gravity, then knowledge detached itself from faith, and conceived a world, whose problems could all be solved by the

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human understanding, with its powers of calculation and measurement. In this view of the world the varied and changeful drama of development was reduced to the laws of movement, and made capable of a mechanical explanation. The thought of a creation, and the idea that Nature's laws were enacted with regard to moral values, have become, in this view of the world, at least a superfluous hypothesis.

The first step towards the destruction of the idea of the systematic unity of our knowledge was taken when Ethics was finally emancipated from Physics, on the one hand, and (even more important) from Faith on the other. This advance has, however, hardly penetrated the general consciousness. When Kant made clear the distinction between the categorical and hypothetical imperatives, he set the obligation of the moral law free from any kind of compulsion, from any natural necessity, and also from any sanction through the power of a law-giver superior to man.

This doctrine of Kant, through which, after all, the dignity of man was for the first time really set forth, definitely marked the overthrow of the mediæval view of the world. For what is insight into the laws which rule the mechanism of Nature if there is no such thing as free insight into the moral law, which sets the standard for our per-

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sonal conduct? Without such knowledge man, in spite of all his unlimited advance into the secrets of Nature, would yet remain, in his highest practical decisions, dependent everywhere upon the tutelage of higher powers.

Obviously it is only slowly and amid great struggles that these bold scientific conquests could transform men's views of the world and of life.

A deeper and more sustained effort of the human spirit was naturally required in order to lay the foundation of the new sciences and in order to construct, on the foundation so laid, the system of the mathematical natural sciences and of ethics. No wonder, therefore, that the peaceful advance of science itself has been hindered by errors and mistakes, which made understanding more difficult, and that, further, the presentation of its work and achievement which is here proposed demands a style so carefully measured, restrained and abstract in various ways that the public has neither the capacity to understand nor the willingness to keep pace with it.

But there was a deeper reason still, which made the introduction and the recognition of these scientific achievements more difficult, even from the point of view merely of feeling. Natural science asserted a world unbounded in time and

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space, in opposition to Faith, which, on the other hand, held the conception of a “closed” world, defined and complete in itself. Ethics separated and set free the law of human conduct from any dependence upon the aims of the divine government of the world. Thus the idea—deeply rooted in the reason of man—of the unity of the world seemed to be assailed.

The efforts of Monistic thought to enforce a uniform view of the world were just as little able to satisfy the feeling for truth as were the efforts of Pluralism, which postulated the existence of several worlds. And since, in the conflicting doctrines, the idea of the unity of the world found no longer a secure foothold, each one stood by his own view without entering into that of others, and so interest in the solution of this problem faltered. The religious view of the world, in confused discord with the achievements of human progress, maintained a shadowy existence in Churches and Sects. The Natural Sciences allowed only experience to pass as assured truth. And from both sides efforts were made to keep Ethics in tutelage—efforts which combined in their effect to starve the moral life more and more.

With this confused inheritance the European nations entered into the chaos of the World War, and even during its course they were bound to

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admit the bankruptcy of their view of the world, which for so long had been unsound.

Can we hope for a reconstruction?

When Frederick the Great had ended the Seven Years' War, he immediately began the reconstruction of his State. He made good his promise to build up in seven years what seven years had demolished. The reconstruction of Europe will take longer, if it succeeds at all; and it will only succeed when to the political treaties of peace is added a treaty far more comprehensive and more radical—a treaty of peace between the reformatioins and revolutions which since the beginning of modern times have been struggling among themselves for their rights.

This peace, too, can only come about through men. Only those are qualified to negotiate who know no fear, least of all fear of the truth. For in this peace negotiation it avails men nothing to accommodate to their weaknesses. Only absolute honesty will help them.

To-day I would attempt to lay before you such a treaty of peace, or at least that part of it which I take to be the chief article. I am prompted chiefly by a practical interest, but I believe that I can best serve this practical interest if I abide by my calling, which is that of a philosophical investigator. To philosophise demands sobriety,

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and the test of this sobriety lies in clearness and definiteness of language: the unequivocal relation between word and thought. What, in this way, the language of the philosopher loses in force of imagery and immediate appeal to feeling, it must make good by its power to lead the student to think for himself, and thereby to win a calm certainty of judgment. Without such independence of thought, the result is at best only a lifeless repetition of formulæ. You will therefore understand that I must make some demands on your attention if I am to treat my subject in a way in keeping with my respect for this gathering.

Permit me, however, in order to avoid making unnecessary difficulties for you, to approach our subject by way of a very simple consideration.

Lloyd George has declared that all the Governments more or less stumbled into the war. To many it seems that this phrase puts the question of guilt at last in the right light; since no one is in fault, it is meaningless to seek for the culprit.

I attach another meaning to the pronouncement of the English statesman. Granted that his assertion is correct, it has not proved the question of guilt to be futile, but, on the contrary, it has contributed a good deal to its solution—indeed,

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his assertion contains directly the answer to the question as to the guilty party : "They stumbled into the World War." Men who built up the enormous mechanism of war, which needed, as it were, only the pressure of a finger in order to perform irresistibly its work of destruction, have thus, without knowing what they did, set in motion the machinery of destruction, and left things to take their course. The responsibility for the war, then, rests with the Fatalism with which Governments and governed have let things go as they have gone. With that judgment, it is believed, the question of guilt may be dismissed. What attitude would be taken if a judge chose to pronounce the following sentence on a company of drunken men who had smashed a shop window : "They were all drunk ; they all stumbled into the window ; therefore no one is guilty" ?

Not to deny such Fatalism is to surrender oneself to Fatalism. But if it is to be encountered successfully, the roots from which it is nourished must be discovered and dug up. I see two varieties of this spiritual error. There is, first of all, a Fatalism arising from moral weakness, whether this rests upon weakness of the will or upon thoughtless folly. Fatalism of this sort carries its own condemnation. It seeks no justification.

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But there is a Fatalism more deeply rooted, well known to history as characteristic of Eastern peoples, but which one would hardly expect to find in the advanced life of modern Europe. It springs, in fact, from a misguided religious feeling, and draws from this an apparent justification, of which the Fatalism arising from moral weakness takes advantage, using it as a cloak to hide its own true nature. The demoralising effects are hypocrisy and cynicism.

Fatalism, then, must be attacked at the point at which it influences the will of men, in the shape of an erroneous conviction. If it is the case that Fatalism is derived from a misguided religious feeling, then it is at once clear that there is some want of harmony between the Fatalist's ethical and religious views.

If we wish to investigate the relation of two views to each other, we must first of all try to be clear as to these views themselves; and if we are guided by the practical interest of putting the conduct of men on to the right road, we shall not discuss indefinite opinions about ethics and religion; we shall ask ourselves the question: What does Ethics demand, and what is Religion?

I begin with the first, the question of Ethics, because where science decides, the truth is more

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readily grasped and is more easily accessible. Not that faith is any less certain than science. But the certitude of faith finds expression only in negative ideas—that is, in notions of a reality which we can only conceive by opposing it to what is given in experience. From this, then, we must start—not, indeed, in order to have faith, but in order to understand it.

Ethics sets us tasks—tasks for our conduct—but it does not offer any inducement, such as the convenience or pleasure to be gained through an action. It gives us no counsel of prudence and entices us by no hopes; on the contrary, it reduces everything, which otherwise might seem to man worthy of effort, to the terms of morality—that is, of the fulfilment of duty.

Duty commands absolutely, without reference to any other end, without reference to our inclinations, not even to our love. When something happens which *ought not* to happen, then any advantage arising therefrom loses its weight. When anyone strives after an apparent ideal, which involves setting aside the requirements of duty, or indeed has the presumption to outbid duty, we have a more despicable behaviour than when crude impulse openly rides roughshod over the consciousness of duty.

If duty pays no regard to inclination, then it is

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clear that moral action cannot take place under the influence of emotion, nor even from mere habit. It demands deliberation, and therefore insight into what we "ought." Without such insight it is only by chance that conduct can harmonise with what is morally enjoined. The moral command, again, claims implicit obedience. But that is only possible when a man has insight to perceive the duty laid upon him, and thereby removes its fulfilment from the region of chance. Without such insight, indeed, the demands of duty would never be brought home to him. The obligation which we call duty is no matter of fact, but a law. We cannot take laws as facts for knowledge; we can only perceive them. If, therefore, there is any such thing as a moral law at all, then we can only act morally on the basis of personal insight. Morality stands or falls with the possibility of personal insight into duty. Any command imposed by an outside will would be entirely beyond the range of our insight. We could accept as a fact the claim of this will; we could even submit ourselves to it; but never could such a will base its claim upon moral obligation. If the autonomy of ethics is done away with, if, in other words, the law of duty is based on a higher will, then it is rather the law of duty which is done away with. Duty

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because another wills it is a contradiction in terms.

With this exposition of the notion of duty, the autonomy of ethics and its independence of any authority is established. And for this it has been entirely unnecessary to define what, then, is really commanded by duty. Enough that we are able to conceive the notion of duty, then the autonomy of ethics has been established.

We stand now at the point where we can fix our eyes upon the relation of the ethical to the religious view of the world. If the Fatalist undertakes to explain his conduct as dependent upon the divine will, then he surrenders the possibility of moral action. Perhaps he does not even claim to *know* the divine will. That history is guided by the will of God suffices to make the task of realising the good amongst men by personal effort null and void.

If human life is guided by a higher providence, then it is under the sway of eternal goodness. But where eternal goodness reigns, there it is only possible to be good, not to become good. Though the world may appear imperfect to the limited vision of man, it cannot—being ruled by divine goodness—be so in fact. Therefore all man's attempts to improve the world must be

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just as meaningless as if he set out to bid the wind to blow or to command the sun to bestow warmth and light.

The Fatalist who accepts the course of life as an inevitable fate, and denies personal responsibility, merely represents, in so doing, the only valid conclusion from the religious interpretation of history. For if, in order to save morality, one tried the evasion, "Maybe the will of God is just this development of man toward the good," then the Fatalist—not merely with better logic, but with even better faith—would answer by pointing to God's perfection. It is impossible to think of God as creator of the insufficient. His ends cannot be represented as subject to development in Nature and as dependent upon the help of His creatures.

Whoever combines the religious view of the world with the ethical in *one* view is inevitably led, not only to the subordination of human aims to God's aims, but also to the abandonment of the ethical task altogether. Any attempt to maintain the inherent necessity of the "ought," which is the essential thing in duty, leads him to insoluble contradictions with the idea of faith.

The sovereignty of the good in Nature can only be conceived as a demand upon the human will, as an end to be realised only through human

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activity. Though the ethical view of the world by no means excludes the recognition of divine ends, it cannot conceive them as being in force in Nature. The principles of faith and the principles of ethics can never be united in one world view ; for limited human knowledge they are apart. The ethical view of the world has no reference to the highest good in the world, not even to the destiny of man, in respect of the world-aim, but only to the aims which man, from his own insight into the law of duty, sets himself in Nature, and according to which he should shape his life and his history.

The religious view of the world rises above this view of the worth and aim of man in Nature. We have faith in the reality of a world under the sway of the divine will, but owing to the limitations of our reason the hope of developing this religious view of the world in positive notions, and of uniting it theoretically with the ethical view under one principle, remains for ever vain. The Fatalist who misunderstands the law of the division of truth into the different views of the world carries over the principles of the divine order of the world into human life in Nature. His religious feeling is misguided. He falls into a view of the world which denies the autonomy, and therewith the moral destiny, of man. He makes him a mere

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creature, blindly guided by an invisible hand. Men blindly stumbled into the World War. This sentence, laden with cynicism, the Fatalist cannot refuse to accept.

The bridge which Fatalism builds between the eternal and the finite world order does not bear. Fatalism does not satisfy the deeper convictions of men. We cannot surrender the truth of the moral demands which are perceptible to everyone in the voice of conscience. If the Fatalist comes up against a conflict between the ethical and the religious view, then he abandons the ethical truth without reflecting that such a conflict should make him suspect his own premises; for one truth cannot exclude another truth.

There would, indeed, be an insoluble contradiction, so that we should be compelled to sacrifice the one view in favour of the other if it should prove true that we were capable of unlimited knowledge, for in that case, indeed, the systematic unity of our view of the world must actually correspond to the objective unity of the world as it is subjectively known to us.

I cannot introduce here the proof of the necessary limitation of our knowledge as it is developed by the Critical Philosophy in the doctrine of Transcendental Idealism, but we may here observe

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—and that is far enough, too, for our purpose—that, without that tacit presumption of an unlimited capacity of knowledge, the impossibility of combining the ethical and the religious view of the world does not allow us to conclude that there is a contradiction between them. And that, conversely, from the separation of these two views of the world, we can infer the falsity of that presumption—that is to say, we can forthwith prove Transcendental Idealism, according to which we cannot positively know the world of things-in-themselves.

But there arises here, as to the relation between the ethical and the religious view of the world, a still deeper question, which goes beyond that of the compatibility of these two world views. We have the definite, although dim, conception that an intimate bond exists between religion and morality.

For all positive religions, which have based ethics upon the revelation of the divine will, there is here no problem. But since the notion of duty, originally obscure, has become clear, and the independence of ethics has therewith been recognised, the relation between the ethical and the religious view of the world has become indefinite and uncertain and requires further clarification.

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We previously considered the relation of man to his duty only from the side of knowledge, and we found his autonomy in the fact that he can recognise the moral law only through his personal insight. But it might still seem needful to inquire whether man is, in himself, capable of *fulfilling* the law.

If the autonomy of human reason does not include this capacity, then man remains, at the decisive point, still dependent on aid from above. The emancipation of ethics from religion must then be held to have failed. The separation of the ethical from the religious view of the world cannot be sustained.

The interest of this problem is by no means merely theoretic ; on the contrary, it is a matter of immediate practical interest to man, his highest practical interest : the question whether man as a moral being, left to his own resources, is capable of the fulfilment of duty.

The opposition to what seems to be the overweening presumption of reason is concentrated at this point to compel it to surrender, and so to save humanity from taking a responsibility under the burden of which it must inevitably break down.

So, in fact, Kant's declaration of the emancipation of the moral reason has challenged all those who would keep humanity in tutelage.

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The conflict is waged more openly where the protection of assured traditions and superior knowledge admit no fear of defeat. In all other cases the issue is confused, on the one hand, by vain insistence on what is agreed, such as the existence of duties, and on the other hand by the appeal to personalities, who have won the pure love of men and whom piety and reverence refuse to denounce.

Let us leave the doctrines and sayings of these personalities on one side ; and, confining ourselves to the law of duty in its strictness, let us ask ourselves : Can the simple consciousness of duty become for man the motive of conduct ?

The challenge of duty comes to man only when he is faced with a choice, and indeed with a choice which compels him to Either—Or. Either he resolves upon the one course of action, and in that way fulfils his duty, or he resolves upon the other and infringes his duty. There is no third course. There is no tragic conflict of duties, but only the conflict of having to renounce the satisfaction of an interest for the sake of duty—for duty alone. For duty does not commend itself to us through a value obtainable by its fulfilment. It brings no reward with it. It is no merit. Duty, moreover, does not enjoin an action because it is

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good and worthy of our effort. What does "good" mean here? The action is only good in so far as it fulfils duty, and it is not good, and is no longer worthy of effort, if it infringes duty. Thus in the conflict of contending inclinations no positive value sways the will to side with duty. And just as little does a threat or fear of harm compel. The law has no power over man, and he can still and silence the voice of conscience.

But does not duty, through that which it enjoins, necessarily awaken motives which soften its own severity? Do not sympathy and love and inner satisfaction take the side of the consciousness of duty? The word "You ought" gives here the answer. There is no necessary connection between duty and love, between duty and inner satisfaction. There is the command "You ought," and the exhortation "Love your neighbour," but there is no command "You ought to love your neighbour." Such a command contradicts itself. Love is a free gift. Duty, on the contrary, is a law, and he who is resolved to fulfil this law must be prepared to act against his love.

But as to inner satisfaction, it is the *result* of a disposition which is loyal to duty, and it vanishes if speculation as to satisfaction takes the place of that disposition. The happiness which this inner

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satisfaction affords does not, indeed, necessarily outweigh the suffering which the very man who is loyal to duty must at need undergo. He would be a foolish dreamer who, for the sake of the enjoyment of that satisfaction, would undertake all the painful conflicts into which duty takes a man.

So, then, we ask once more : What gives man the strength to carry out his duty ? What is it that affords him—the man who is sensuous and rejoices in beauty, who is light-hearted and passionate—the steadfastness to defy all temptations and to follow the voice of conscience ? What has enabled men throughout the ages to risk happiness and life where no renown was in prospect, no tangible advantage beckoned, no encouragement sustained them, where *alone* they have resolved upon that which they recognised to be right ?

There is a doctrine which says in reply to this : Man does not resolve alone. He does not do his duty merely because it is his duty. He knows that there is a sanction in another world. "If there were no sanction in the life beyond," asks a Jesuit moral philosopher of our time, "what could have restrained the Christian martyrs from yielding to the demands of their persecutors, and so saving their lives ? Was it the dishonour of the deed ? The fear of the Categorical Imperative ?

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... I believe that every unprejudiced man feels the poverty of such motives, in such solemnly earnest moments, when the highest good is at stake and the question is one of 'to be or not to be.'"

But had the clever Jesuit put the counter-question, What kept the *heretics* from yielding to the demands of their persecutors, and so saving their lives? he could then scarcely have missed the answer. Does not the explanation which he sought lie in the fact that in the solemnly earnest moments when the question of the highest good was at stake these men were conscious that life is *not* the highest good, but that of all evils the greatest is guilt?

What has given strength to martyrs and heretics, what has enabled every earnest man to do what he has recognised as his duty, is the calm reflection on his dignity as a man, the surrender of which would make him despicable in his own eyes. Self-respect, originating immediately in the consciousness of duty, and without the addition of any other motive, is the sufficient driving force of the moral man.

Maybe duty has never yet been fulfilled simply for its own sake, without any alloy of other impulse. No one, indeed, can guarantee the unconditional morality of his conduct. But what

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has such speculation to do with the consciousness of the binding character of the obligation with the certainty that one could always make the moral impulse prevail, that strength of will should have sufficed for that?

No will can over-ride duty, but the consciousness of duty enables the will to reject all motives which conflict with duty. There is no question of slavish subjection when a man resolves upon what he ought, for his moral will does not submit to a higher power; on the contrary, it is just a question of sovereignty and freedom, of the *absolute* supremacy of the pure moral will over all impulses and necessities, which otherwise hold men in bondage.

There is as yet no freedom if in the surging of desire a man forgets everything which is wont to move him. He may feel himself strong because his conduct has a clear direction; he may be carried along by the joy of action, but he remains determined by an alien influence and in dependence upon an impulse which he himself has not chosen.

In moral self-determination alone does man free himself from all such dependence, since, free from any compulsion, from simple insight into the law, he resolves upon the good. In recognising the unconditional necessity of duty, what we expect

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from ourselves is, however, more than the successful overcoming, *in every particular case*, of all hindrances to the fulfilment of duty. It is the recognition that we can fulfil it in all circumstances, the consciousness of a power which is superior to any *possible* counter-impulse which Nature may afford. Such a power presupposes nothing less than an *infinite* strength of the rational will.

This certitude of the infinite strength of the rational will is not derived from experience. It fundamentally surpasses the limits of experience. In each particular moral action the strength of the moral impulse shows itself only as a definite finite force. Experience never allows us to know other than finite forces. To each force in Nature there is a greater force possible, by which it is overcome. The certainty of the infinite strength of the will to good, therefore, goes beyond all experience. In this certainty man rises above the limitations of his knowledge. He judges himself no longer according to naturalistic notions, but he presses forward to a judgment according to ideas. There appears to him the idea of freedom, and, subordinating his will to this idea, he *believes* in the freedom of his will.

According to naturalistic notions, man ~~knows~~
himself as a finite being, determined according to natural laws of which he has knowledge. ~~He has~~

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knowledge at the same time of his moral task—indeed, his knowledge extends to the recognition that the fulfilment of this task presupposes freedom, and that the merely natural order does not contradict this.

But the reality of such freedom, and with it the reality of an order of things without the necessity of “must,” surpasses the limits of Nature. Its certainty belongs to faith. It is of a religious nature. As a moral being man becomes conscious of the freedom of his will, and so defines himself as belonging to an order of things which points beyond Nature. He defines himself as a member of a world under the law of freedom and of the good. The recognition of this world in faith is religion. Here, then, is the bond between religion and ethics. In moral self-determination, and in it alone, and with the fullest vindication of ethical autonomy, the conviction of faith which slumbers in the depths of reason comes into the light of consciousness, and opens the way for man to religion.

But religion does not exhaust itself in the recognition of a world under the idea of freedom and of the good, by which Nature sinks down to a mere phenomenon. Religion is more than that which becomes clear to the thinking man in the

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ideas of faith, by means of which he opposes the eternal to the finite. It has its real life in *feeling*: in the religious feelings which are associated with the ideas of faith.

Here alone lies the positive element of a religion which is free from all superstition. That which is unattainable to all the conceptions of knowledge, and which only finds expression negatively in the ideas of faith, we do actually possess in those feelings of *Abhängung*, to use the term coined by Fries, and which, in fact, embraces the deepest significance of the word. In these feelings which move us in the face of what is beautiful and sublime in Nature, and in the actions of men, there lives the certainty that, in the objects of our knowledge, there does appear to us the very reality which is the object of our faith. This wholly affirmative conviction which, recognising the eternal significance of the finite appearance, brings about, in fact and in truth, the unity of the views of the world can, however, just because it consists in a feeling which is inexpressible and which cannot be analysed into any concepts, never suffice to disclose for us a definite knowledge of the eternal.

Those who are unacquainted with Psychology are certainly at this point always exposed to the danger of taking the convincing strength of this feeling for an intuitive evidence, and so of claiming

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it as an immediately intuitive knowledge of the eternal.

The pretensions of *Mysticism* rest upon this psychological illusion.

After all that has been said, it is clear that this doctrine of the immediate contact of the soul with God, which heightens even to the seeing of God, must be at variance with Ethics, just as it is not consistent with *Abndung*, the essence of which is the recognition of the *mystery* of the eternal.

Mysticism values morality at best as exercise in order to develop in itself that higher power. For it has always recognised, besides spontaneous conversion, the way of effort. Yet almost always, in the case of the mystics, divorce from Ethics has taken place, and that quite consistently. The really mystical experience of illumination falls to the lot of only a few chosen ones. It cannot be forced—at least, not by merely moral conduct. Morality proves to be insufficient, and therefore sinks in value for the devout. But it proves itself also to be superfluous as soon as the mystic has begun to tread the path of vision. For how, if he succeeds in grasping his eternal destiny in all its clearness, can the doctrine of the end which man sets for himself hold its own? *Mysticism* destroys Ethics. It puts in its place *Asceticism*, and that means here turning away from the world.

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But in like manner it destroys *Abndung* and puts in its place *Ecstasy*—that is, the intoxication of a union with God which breaks through the barriers of reason.

But let us ask ourselves, What is the relation of the unperverted religious feeling to the moral life?

The consciousness of the infinite strength of the moral will is accompanied by the elation of feeling which we call *Enthusiasm*. With the fulfilling of duty there is often associated satisfaction, which may indeed be intensified to delight when a man has at last trodden the path of action and finds his moral victory within sight. But Enthusiasm leaves these feelings far behind. It lays hold of man's inmost soul and raises him above himself. When man, having attained his moral victory through the efforts of his understanding and his will, thus becomes conscious of the dignity of his free nature, then, in the pure conception of the moral law, the feeling seizes him, of which Kant says: "That it would rather be necessary to moderate the flight of an unlimited power of imagination, in order not to allow it to rise to enthusiasm, than, from fear of the powerlessness of these ideas, to seek help for them in pictures and childish apparatus."

Enthusiasm arises where inner emotion, nay,

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still more, where vigorous self-activity lives, and the idea of the eternal destiny of our being finds a response. From this Enthusiasm lustre and warmth stream back upon that activity, adding beauty to its purity and constancy.

But morality in its purity and constancy is here the first and decisive thing. Enthusiasm, once aroused, can for a time sustain the will and lend wings to action. But it has no life of its own, and when artificially nourished it becomes a shallow, boastful fantasticism, which infallibly destroys the real nature of enthusiasm.

Morality, on the contrary, though it may bear in itself no other recommendation than the sober fulfilling of the law, is, for that reason alone, in Nature, where the idea of the good can only find expression through self-conquest, superior as action to any mere feeling.

Far more even than that. The consciousness of duty in its autonomy, without the need of any alien motive: this simple consciousness of duty alone brings man to the consciousness of his freedom, and thereby to faith.

Where it is supposed that the fulfilling of duty needs the uplift and incitement of devout feeling, where it is believed that it is necessary to quench the supposed pride of a self-sufficient righteousness by offering edifying religious teachings, there not

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only are the foundations of all morality destroyed : there the springs from which enthusiasm arises are choked up : there man is robbed of the possibility of becoming conscious of his faith.

Of what help are doctrines and pious narratives, mysteries and solemn rites, by means of which it is sought to arouse these devout feelings and hoped to support virtue ? They remain words and empty signs, or mere edifying entertainment of the mind, so long as personal living faith does not fill them with independent meaning, or they become substitutes and narcotics for those who bow themselves before God only from cowardice.

But as regards pride of spirit we will not forget that the conception of "Pharisaism" is derived from the conduct of theologians.

Moral autonomy is inseparably bound up with moral accountability. Moral accountability judges the conduct of man by the moral law in so far as he recognises it by his own insight. This judgment, which has to do with the sincerity of the soul, prevents the over-rating of oneself.

This consideration, however, which has reference only to particular isolated actions of man, leads to a problem which lies still deeper. Man violates the moral law not only in particular instances.

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Every earnest man feels that the fulfilling of duty will always be for him a struggle; that an inclination to evil is inseparably bound up with his nature. He knows himself, as Kant puts it, to be radically evil.

This idea of guilt has led, in the positive religions, to the doctrines of redemption, and in philosophy to theodices. These, as attempts to justify the divine government of the world, are frustrated by the contradictions of which the problem to be solved is full.

The doctrines of redemption are theories of salvation which presuppose a positively definite knowledge of the divine will. They rest, therefore, upon superstition.

What is the significance of the idea of radical evil to the philosophically enlightened, for whom the moral and religious views of the world are separate?

According to the idea of the eternal good, we believe in a world in contrast with Nature—a realm where to-be and to-be-good are necessarily one. According to the idea of freedom, we judge ourselves as free authors of our deeds, and impute to ourselves our moral insufficiency. The idea of moral insufficiency is thus of religious significance. According to our conception of Nature, the power of man is limited, and can therefore be overcome. The

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possibility of such defeat, which is not excluded by the *possibility* of mastering the counter impulses, and which always remains in Nature, necessarily separates him from the *holy* will, which according to its very nature, apart from any overcoming of possible counter-impulses, is directed toward the good—an insufficiency which man, bound within the limits of finite Nature, can never efface by his own power. There is in Nature no conversion or sanctification of man. Here the mystery of death gains its religious significance, which, however, excludes as crazy blasphemy any attempt to approach it through positive notions.

Man is capable of enthusiasm, as he believes in the infinite power of his good will. But, together with this, there still remains in him the conviction of his own unholiness. We understand now that Enthusiasm cannot be the normal mood of the cultivated man.

Man sees the insufficiency of his knowledge. He sees the insufficiency of his will. As a part of Nature, and subject to its laws, he remains a stranger in it, one who is not sufficient unto himself. The moral obligation which he recognises as his task keeps him from despair. It heartens him and strengthens him in his loneliness in Nature. But this mood lacks the reconciling element which the ethical view of the world alone cannot give,

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but which yet does live in the feeling of cultivated people.

This reconciling element springs from the faith that man belongs to a world in which the imperfection which clings to him here is removed. Anything further is for faith an insoluble mystery, before which man bows in trustful humility.

For the cultivated man moral courage and humility fuse together into the mood of *Resignation*, in which his ethical view of the world meets his religious view.

Let us pause here for a moment and look back on the way which lies behind us. We shall then see how steep was the ascent, how narrow the basis from which we set out.

We have presupposed nothing beyond the conception of duty. We have only asked: What is the meaning of "we ought"? And, advancing from this single premise, we have arrived at the point where the transition from ethics to religion is found.

In doing so I was not actuated by the theoretical pleasure of applying the principle of parsimony of hypotheses to the investigations before us; on the contrary, I felt the need of choosing our starting-point so as to exclude as far as possible the conflict of opinions, and for that reason

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to start from what was, after all, a self-evident assertion.

But the narrow content of that premise compels me now to amplify it if, beyond the results we have gained, we wish to reach some outlook at least upon their significance and meaning for life.

The notion of duty, and with it all the considerations based upon it, remains without perceptible application so long as we have not answered the question, *what* we ought: what really is the object of duty?

We need a principle settling the distinctive characteristic which makes all the different duties recognisable as such.

But remarkable! Just here, where everything depends upon receiving from philosophy a firm and unambiguous decision, we discover how, when we freely reflect and exclude the sophistic play of interests, a no less difficulty of explanation arises from the original obscurity of philosophical knowledge itself.

Indeed, the solution appears here so unattainably remote that even the right to put the general question as to the content of duty is contested.

It would therefore be vain, especially as I must hasten to a conclusion, if I here tried to develop an abstract solution of the question. Let us leave, therefore, all the controversies of the philoso-

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phers, and rather consult simply the unprejudiced judgment passed by each plain man, conscious of his responsibility, in his active daily life.

Let us also ask ourselves what it was for which, in the great progressive epochs of national life, men have freely made those sacrifices to which history again and again bears witness.

Put the question to yourselves in this way, and you will agree with me when, without further argument, I say : It is the idea of Justice which in his conscience guides the man of action who is aware of his responsibility. It is the command to treat every other man as his equal and to ask the same in return from him. However difficult it may be to express this idea with scientific clarity, or to establish it by scientific method, you will yet agree with me in this, that if ever a philosophy cannot consistently hold fast this idea of Justice as the fundamental law of all morality, we may know beforehand that it can only be a product of confusion or sophistry.

But certainly, where a philosophy thus confused or sophistic prevails, there, at least in an epoch which is under the influence of a complex and in many ways degenerate civilisation, and which has lost, moreover, the simplicity of its healthy instinct, there ultimately even the usually sound judgment of the common man becomes confused

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and lapses into an affected dilettantism or a dull indifference.

But where the cultivation of moral disposition, and the search therein for the springs of the forces of reformation, is at all valued, but where men yet fail to give to this disposition a steady direction toward an aim, there the assumed purity of disposition declines to that empty enthusiasm which is "easier than doing good."

This sickly weakness of the sense of Justice expresses itself very clearly to-day. It is, indeed, no accidental and passing occurrence, but manifests itself as the symptom of the hereditary disease of the spiritual life of Europe—a disease which poisons the healthy powers of the Western peoples and threatens them with complete ruin.

Its clearest manifestation is the ever-deepening cleft between an inwardness which is introspective and alienated from active life and an outward activity which is without guidance and void of ideals.

This ruinous gulf divides the peoples of the West into the camp of the so-called good men, who hold themselves aloof from the rough business of the world and in a spirit of fatalism rely on the inherent power of the good itself, and the camp of those who are busy in Vanity Fair, who bargain for its power and profit and know full well that

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the pious optimism of the others will never trouble their sphere.

People like to speak of the separation of Church and State, and see in its realisation an achievement for the advance of the freedom of the spirit—an aim certainly worthy of effort, if it is meant thereby that the State should break off its union with Superstition. But that is not thought of to-day. What really is in view, on the contrary, is the separation of the State from the basis of any world-outlook. Even this one might agree to, so far as it is important to prevent the State arbitrarily preferring one view of the world and terrorising any that differed. But the tendency of that idea of separation is not confined to this; on the contrary, what else is the real tendency of this idea than, on the one hand, to prepare the ground for the cult of the ideal, separated from active life and from its moral tasks, though it is only in their active service that religious life can truly flourish, and that, on the other, a soulless State, as a mere institution of power, is abandoned to the rude sport of the forces that are guided by no higher ideal?

Is not even the bare possibility that the idea of such a separation, and the disruption of life which it implies, could be admitted the symptom of a pitiful and shameful spiritual confusion?

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A glance at the facts, however, shows that we are no longer dealing with a mere postulate—indeed, our time gives us a finished picture of Churches chilled into dead forms and of States degenerated in their greed into beasts of prey. The moral life, and with it life altogether, has fled from both. And how should it be otherwise, since, indeed, moral life has its being only in the union of mind and action?

This disruption of life, as we now see, is only the reverse of that confused mentality which knows not how to separate the ethical view of the world from the religious. For, indeed, as we have seen, this mistake must avenge itself by leading to the abandonment of the independence of the ethical task without being able to retain a grip of the religious life.

Only where the independence of the ethical task is recognised, and hunger and thirst after Justice lays hold of men, there only will true life be able to unfold itself afresh, and prepare the soil for a strong and pure public life, which forces the State, with all its powers, into the service of Justice: a State *beside* which there is no need of a Church, because such a State is itself the guardian of the religious life in all its fullness.

So, then, all our reflections blend into harmony in the one thought, that we should combine our

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forces and devote them to a life of struggle in the pure service of justice, quietly certain that the more exclusively and radically we consecrate ourselves to this task, the more freely and strongly the inspiration and warmth of religious life will awaken among us.

VI

THE INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE OF
YOUTH

(Reprinted from the *Handbook of Politics*, Vol. V.)



VI

THE INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE OF YOUTH

[Further information about the International League of Youth (Der Internationale Jugend-Bund) is given in the series of writings, "Public Life," and also in that entitled "The New Reformation," both published by *The New Spirit*, Leipzig.]

THE International League of Youth (I.J.B.) is distinguished from other groups of the modern Youth Movement by the fact that it does not adopt a "youth-culture" which ends in itself. It does not, as though it were a younger class of old folk, merely provide fresh material to come under the influence of the older generation. The young life which it brings together does not accept the doctrine that youth is an end in itself—a doctrine which springs only from egotism or flattery. It recognises only one personal aim for man, that of living a worthy life; and it knows that it is necessary to begin quite early to direct its energies toward this aim, which is an ideal for life as a whole. On the other hand, it refuses to accept this aim as one imposed from without. It submits to no authority beyond the law of its

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own reason. Certainly it is conscious that this law in itself only lies dormant in the reason ; that training and maturity of spirit are necessary in order to reveal its demands. Therefore it consciously places itself under the leadership of men in whom it finds superiority in these respects, their superiority showing itself in the fact that they do lead it in the path toward the worthy life.

It freely chooses such leaders, not only from the need of attaching itself to men ripened by work and experience—in that way there would come to be, under the circumstances, a body of disciples but no League—but, above all, from the consciousness of the community of aim to which they, as well as their leaders, are subordinating their life.

The growing distress of our time thrusts this aim upon the adherents of the I.J.B. They do not acknowledge any Fate which governs the conditions of human life, and from the power of which they can preserve their personal freedom only by retiring into the sacred stillnesses of their own hearts. They believe in the power of the human will, and call man to account for the evil which happens and which is suffered through him.

They do not shun the reproach which comes from the preachers of inaction, that they are neglecting the salvation of their own soul, but

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answer with the saying of Confucius: "He who is intent only upon keeping his own life pure brings the great human relations into confusion. When the nobleman takes an office, he does his duty."

Neither do they share the tender-hearted desire of those who are striving to save humanity from sorrow. For it is not the mere sense of their own need, nor sympathy with the misfortunes of others, which brings them together in a league of brothers. The enemy against whom their struggle is directed is solely the injustice which prevails in society through the guilt of man—but injustice in all its forms, not only where it becomes glaringly manifest, but also even where the victim does not see his aggressor.

They refuse to be misled by the plea that their mind may be closed to the fostering of the higher cultural ideals, since the order of mere Justice does not as yet present a positive worth. Upon this last point there is agreement also amongst the adherents of the I.J.B. But it seems to them to be more consistent to take up the fight for Justice all the more earnestly. "If righteousness perishes," says Kant, "there is no longer any value in man's living upon the earth"—in fact, if Justice has no positive worth of its own, that is so only because it is the essential pre-condition of the worth of a social order at all. Where not so

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much as this pre-condition is fulfilled, there all claim to a supposed culture is only false pretension and mere self-deception ; the keeping up of this claim is accordingly only the expression of a barbarism all the more mischievous.

But what has this struggle for Justice to do with a League of *Youth* ?

Only one who believes in Justice will carry on the struggle for Justice. The older generation living to-day does not possess this faith. It is under the spell of a fatalistic conception of history or of a theory of relative Justice, and so has lost its strength of moral conviction. Youth in its vigour still possesses this power, and, what is more significant, it does not shrink from taking upon itself the demands which are implicit in its conviction. For the fulfilling of these demands there is also necessary a serious and well-grounded schooling of the powers, such as can only be successful in the case of the young who are still capable of training.

But that this League of Youth must be international is a matter of course from the very nature of its aim. For the cause with which we are here concerned is not that of any particular people. Reason and Justice do not halt in their demands at the frontiers of any country.

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We should, however, seriously misunderstand the educational work undertaken by the I.J.B. if we regarded it simply as another of the numerous movements which look for the bringing about of just conditions from an education for righteousness penetrating ever-widening circles. Certainly, if all men did right of their own free will, Justice would rule ; and if education could raise humanity to this height, then such educational work would be the given way for the followers of the ideal of Justice.

The Spirit of the Age, which is aware of the madness of injustice, and sees that it has all power in its hands, is inclined to this work of education. The ethical mission of Christianity, which, relying upon example and instruction, strives for the moral cleansing of the world, is still unfulfilled. Its fulfilment may be difficult. Nevertheless no age seems better fitted than ours to fall back upon this means of moral cleansing—an age which has to taste even to the bitter dregs the disastrous effect of the misuse of material power in wars and revolutions.

In such disordered times, those who still have any belief at all in restoration and recovery are wont to seek a safeguard against the use of material force. For what is to guarantee that such

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force shall be used for purer ends? And so the point is reached at which every institution, every organisation which relies upon physical force, is rejected, and men plead for the dissolution of all institutions based upon force.

But then these despisers of force are not content with bare negation. Forthwith they enter upon the path of education, and set their hope upon the awakening of the power of religion.

What success can be seriously expected from this way of reforming the mind of individuals? Can the aim be reached by this way of mere instruction and education? Can it, indeed, so much as perceptibly further the preparation for more just conditions?

Let us leave out of consideration the fact that neither the example nor the teaching of the great religious founder, whose Churches encompass the face of the earth, has accomplished the work in which one would fain believe to-day. Let us realise two simple facts, which already sufficiently explain why all educational endeavours to bring about just conditions in society are doomed to despair. One of these facts is: that men die; the other: that the enemies of the good have their ends too much at heart to trust the success of their efforts to mere propagation by word and

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the power of example. When a man dies, whatever of virtuous disposition lived in him perishes with him. His memory may be held in honour, the recollection of his deeds may stimulate those who come after him, but all this, however, only in so far as there are receptive minds ready to be influenced by the example of a noble man. If education develops in man the power for good, then his death destroys even the work which education had accomplished in him. Each one who is born later needs anew the same educational efforts. If he does not receive this education, or carries it on along false lines, then the next generation sinks down from the level already reached by the preceding generation, which owed its height only to itself and its teachers.

We cannot conceive how, if we renounce the organisations which outlast the life of the teacher, his educational success is to be backed up and secured and the way prepared for a steady upward advance of humanity. An over-estimate of the immediate influence of a distinguished educationist thus leads to the wasting of what such men have achieved from an educational point of view during their lifetime.

But how, indeed, if even only a few men withdraw themselves from the influence of education, and employ, for their unjust plans, the physical

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force which the well-disposed scorn to use? Does not every day teach us how a few, thanks to their superior organisation, sacrifice whole classes of men to their selfish ends? To propose to break the violent tyranny of such men by speeches from pulpits, from platforms, from all street corners, is the simple dream of enthusiasts or the foolish enterprise of chatterers.

The I.J.B. is not a society which pursues such educational Utopias. Its educational work does not live on the hope of moral success, which even at best is only accidental, in public life. It bows to the fact that everywhere in life the stronger force decides the issue, according to a natural law, the impossibility of evading which we may regret, but which we cannot destroy by ignoring it. Logically, therefore, the I.J.B. undertakes the task of subjecting political life, which relies upon institutions and which guides society by their means, to the law of Justice by bringing these institutions into the service of Justice.

Power in the State is administered by men. Accordingly everything depends upon this, that men who are determined upon Justice obtain the power of the State. But only a suitable training ensures for us the existence of such men—men whose will is firmly directed toward Justice. With this task of training, the I.J.B. has set itself

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to work on educational lines, so as to serve a political aim. Its educational work is limited to the training of politicians. The aim of this training is not the harmonious development of all good capacities in all men, but the ethical strengthening and training of a few men, sound in mind and body, to be political leaders. The political task which is present to the mind of the I.J.B. is not the development of power for the realisation of just any end, but an organisation of society in which Justice is assured through external means of power.

We know what Justice demands from us—at least, we can know it if we ask philosophy. But philosophic knowledge will remain school wisdom until men sufficiently educated shall have brought their wills into harmony with their philosophical insight. The aim of the I.J.B. is, as we see, really no other than the old Platonic ideal of the rule of the wise—an aim which has as yet remained a mere ideal because its realistic significance has been misunderstood. It has been set aside, as a supposed Utopia, without any attempt at realisation, in favour of other efforts, which were, in fact, far more Utopian.

There are three preconceptions in particular which have given to this task the appearance of being Utopian. The impression was very natural that the intention might be to rear the political

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genius ; or else the mistake might be made of bringing up men from early years in the idea of their later vocation as leaders ; or finally, it might be expected from the mere appearance of such leaders, when once we have really succeeded in training them, that the final political success would be brought about.

The I.J.B. has so little intention of training the political genius that, on the contrary, the meaning of its work consists in our being made independent of the chance of his existence, in order that at least the best *available* powers may not miss the way to political leadership. But if chance does bestow upon us a surpassing endowment, even then it still remains a task of *training*, so that the decision of the aim to whose service the genius shall devote his powers shall not depend upon chance.

The I.J.B. further has in mind no "prince-royal" training. The educational fellowship embraces all who are strong enough to pass certain minimum demands of the rigorous schooling of the will which is carried on in it. Little by little out of this company there will, of course, emerge those who, thanks to their intellectual and ethical capacities, understand better how to use what the training affords than the rest. They will naturally come to be leaders of their comrades.

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There will be educational fellowship between those who lead and those who follow ; and this clears up at once the last misunderstanding, which implied that the League imagined it would reach its goal merely through the training of its leaders. The further task of the League lies just in this, the training of a following for the future leaders, which with full understanding and loyalty will go with them. For unless such followers were available, the work of the leaders would be doomed to that hopeless struggle against the resistance of overwhelming odds of which the history of the abortive reformations affords so many tragic examples.

Advancement within the narrower educational fellowship of the League is the first step to advancement in public life. This advancement is made possible by means of the followers, the Comrades of the League, who on their part, when the hour shall have come, are to come together to form a Party of Justice. Though this end lies as yet in the distance, it draws nearer only through systematic work in its direction.

The systematic nature of such work will only be fully realised in a free International College and a School organically connected with it. The I.J.B. is striving with all its power to call into being such a College of political philosophy. In

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order to collect the financial resources, without which, in this world, no ideal organisation can gain a foothold, and without the addition of which all personal sacrifices which are made for the ideal are frittered away, the "Society of the Friends of the College of Political Philosophy" has associated itself with the I.J.B. It is endeavouring to enlist friends and well-wishers in this auxiliary work. It only depends upon the realisation of this assistance in sufficient measure whether the strong will for the future which is rising up in the I.J.B. shall attain its aim.

Even with the establishment of the College, however, the activity of the I.J.B. will in no way become superfluous. As it now carries on pioneer work in various local groups, so after the College is established it will be the source from which the central institution will draw its suitable teachers and scholars. It will, further, carry on the work of building up the Party of Justice, and afford the first active sphere of public life for those who are trained in the College.

The I.J.B. which undertook the preparation for these two tasks in the midst of the war, and under the pressure of the tide of nationalism, is working at present in various carefully selected towns of Germany and Switzerland, in close, well-organised fellowships which include young men

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from all classes. Physical, intellectual and organising training advances by methodical stages. The worthy fulfilment of the tasks which are here set affords the foundation for the training of real character. Each year, under the leadership of the directors of the League, there is a ten days' course, which brings together the most capable members of the various local groups, and at the same time brings them into a close working fellowship with the older friends of the League. A Council of Friends, composed of men and women of international outlook from different countries, is associated with the I.J.B.

Mere proposals and programmes cannot make the world any better ; nor can it be made better by developing the good qualities of young men in a carefully selected *milieu*, in the hope that they will surely hold their own and will draw others within the spell of their personality. It can only become better through an organisation of free men, who set themselves against the despotic organisations which are at work in the service of imperialism, capitalism and clericalism—an organisation which, since it undertakes the struggle for power, for the first time, and on the whole, opens out the prospect that all efforts directed toward the liberation of humanity will on their part achieve success.

NOTES TO THE INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE OF YOUTH

I. ITS RELATION TO OTHER SOCIALIST PARTIES.

(1) Up to the year 1923, members of the I.J.B. were active in one or other of the Socialist parties in Germany. In this year it was decided that all members of the League should join the Social Democratic Party (S.P.D.), since its programme seemed to approximate to the aims of the League. It was hoped that by helping forward the political work of that Party some contribution would be made toward the realisation of the Just State.

(2) The members of the I.J.B. continued to represent their views strictly within the forms allowed within the Party. But the Party leaders, fearing the growing influence of the I.J.B., raised the objection that it was carrying on a secret policy of division within the S.P.D. Discussions and attacks from the Social Democrats of the Right led, in November 1925, to the exclusion of the members of the I.J.B. from the Social Democratic Party.

There were mainly three points in which there was a difference of opinion between the I.J.B. and the S.P.D. The I.J.B. thought that the alliance of the S.P.D. with the Catholic Party was reprehensible, which was denied by the S.P.D. Further, the I.J.B. thought that the co-operation between employers and workers, into which the S.P.D. had entered, would impede the attainment of the worker's economic freedom. And, finally, the I.J.B. was convinced that, when decisions are made by a mere counting of votes, as was the custom of the S.P.D. in harmony with the democratic principle, it would make the attainment of the goal of the party far more improbable.

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(3) This development necessitated the founding of a Party for its own special ends, and the I.J.B. became the "Internationaler Sozialistischer Kampf-Bund" (I.S.K.). This League is organised entirely on the basis of Leadership, and stands for a policy which is built up without reserve upon the foundation of Nelson's philosophy (and upon Oppenheimer's theory of national economics). In questions of practical politics, the League is able generally to co-operate with organisations which stand to the left of the S.P.D. The local associations of the League were able in this way to co-operate in the propaganda against the compensation of the former German rulers, and recently against the conclusion of an Imperial Concordat. A further task, which lies at the heart of the practical political work of the League, is the explanation of the land question, since the economic programme of the I.S.K. sees in the solution of the land question the key to the removal of the exploitation of the labourer.

(4) The political education of their members constitutes an essential part of the work of the local associations. In this they are supported by the educational work at Walkemühle, where young workers of ability are trained for a longer period with a view to their political activity. After their training, these workers return to their occupation and to their practical political work. The education of the will to self-control constitutes the main portion of the discipline.

G. K.

II. THE SCHOOL AT WALKEMÜHLE.

(From *Die Tat*, a monthly journal for the future of German culture.)

When Haenisch, then Prussian Minister of Public Instruction, shortly after the Revolution, asked my advice as to what he could do, in view of the wretched financial position, in order to carry out the reforms necessary in our edu-

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tional system, I suggested that he should close all the schools in the country, from the national schools to the universities. By this simple measure, instead of burdening the national exchequer with fresh expenditure, he would set free enormous sums for its service and at the same time bring about an uplifting of intellectual life which would immortalise his name in history.

For what purpose do we need the schools to-day? It is said: in order to prepare the young for their entrance into the social order. And, in fact, how would children become members of our social order without the costly and ingenious expenditure of the labour that is bestowed upon them? How could this social order itself continue to exist at all? Men would retain what they bring with them as unspoiled children: belief in truth, self-confidence and the sense of Justice, as these find expression in courage and firmness in the defence of their personal conviction. They would fearlessly call lies, "lies"; theft, "theft"; and murder, "murder"—a bluntness which would inevitably result in the breaking up of our artificial social order.

In what does the superiority of those who are grown up really consist? In their superior physical strength and perhaps in the fact that they have learned by experience.

They are able to use this advantage in order to impose their judgment and their will upon the children, and thus to destroy their integrity and courage—an outrage which begins as soon as the teacher at all expresses his judgment.

This superiority *could* also be used to protect the children *against* such outrage—that is to say, to create for them a free opportunity, making it possible to lead them *out of* our social order.

The school at Walkemühle is meant to be such an opportunity for children, without distinction of nation, race or class.

If, in response to the request of the editor, I am to

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say anything at all of what makes this school unique in education, in the limited space assigned to me, it can only be this : In this school one does not need to lie.

I hear the school reformers asking : Is not that too little ?

It will be worth while to speak about that when once that little is attained—the little, that is to say, that men grow up, who shall retain the child's bold fidelity to conviction ; and, when grown up, shall use the strength and experience which they have gained in order to defend, with this twofold armour, the conviction that their fellow-men also have the right to grow up and to live as honest men.

LEONARD NELSON.

TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

WHILE these final pages were passing through the press there came the news of the unexpected death of Professor Nelson, on October 29th, before he had reached the age of forty-five years. To his friends in this country and in America, no less than to his immediate friends and pupils in Germany, his passing has brought the sense of a great loss.

By those who knew him best, Leonard Nelson was held in the highest esteem as a "thinker," as a sincere and devoted worker for the cause of right and of peace. He was in the true Kantian succession, convinced as to the trustworthiness of human reason and as to the validity of the results of consistent thought.

His pupils idolised him as a kindhearted and patient teacher, one who lived out before them what he asked from them.

He was not merely a thinker. For him thought was not an end in itself, but a means and a weapon. All the strength of his intellect was devoted to the establishment of a science of Ethics, which should form the basis of an actual social and political life.

Literally we may say that he was consumed by his passion for the Ideal. In his devotion to his task for years he only allowed himself every other night in bed, so that, when his illness came, the weakened frame had not strength to resist it.

He will be greatly missed as a friend and a leader, but his work will go on; the truth for which he gave himself will live and triumph; and the ideal of a society based upon right, which is the inspiring element in all his teaching, will yet be realised.

W. LANSDELL.

November 10, 1927.

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